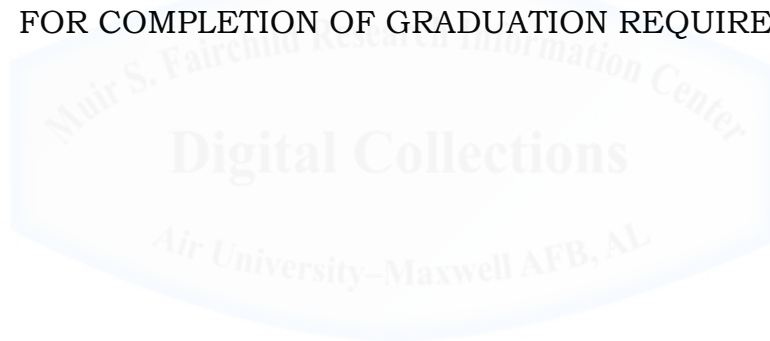


GLOBAL NATO:  
TRANSFORMATION OF A REGIONAL ALLIANCE

BY  
THORSTEN TANSKI

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## APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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## ABSTRACT

Since its inception, NATO has been more than just a military alliance. Common security interests have made NATO a political integrator of transatlantic cooperation. While the confrontation between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact determined the global security agenda, the end of the Cold War left NATO with existential questions about its very purpose. Options for NATO's future level of ambition range from retrenching to the role of a defensive alliance for the security of Europe on the one end, to further expansion of its sphere of interest to satisfy its members' security interests globally on the other.

In this paper, the author argues for amending NATO's security posture towards the latter and transformation into a whole-of-all-governments global security alliance. The transatlantic bargain will lose its mutual benefit, if NATO members cannot agree on a more progressive interpretation of global security requirements in the twenty-first century. Europe and the US must underpin their economic and political weight, but might fail to do so individually. In fulfillment of its members' requirements, promulgating NATO as prestigious "brand-name" will foster both security and stability in Europe and institutionalized security cooperation beyond NATO's regional scope. The analysis in this paper shows that otherwise NATO will, sooner or later, outlive its purpose.

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## Introduction

The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington DC on 4 April 1949 manifested the post-World War II security order. The Cold War confrontation between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact determined the global security agenda. During this period, NATO, as the Western military alliance, has also functioned as a rectifying institution to converge divergent interests of its member nations. For more than 40 years, the common-threat perception and common-security interests have made NATO more than just a military alliance. Rather, it served as an integrator for transatlantic security politics.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union) presented an imminent security concern for the European geo-political landscape after 1945. The advances of Soviet-supported communist movements (for example in Greece), the coup in Czechoslovakia, and the blockade of Berlin eventually convinced the founding nations of NATO to abide in a Western-oriented transatlantic alliance that balanced Soviet power ambitions in Europe. Signing the treaty had two major implications that persist in contemporary global security politics. First, it articulated the divide between the Western-oriented nations and the Soviet Bloc. While NATO member nations were able to develop a basic set of common norms and values, the USSR dominated the Warsaw Pact militarily. Still today, Russia, as the legitimate successor of the USSR, considers most of the old Warsaw Pact-territory as an area of particular interest and invokes a policy to bind the near abroad nations to her economic and security interests. But from early on, Soviet politics had failed to promulgate legitimate and sustainable concepts built on member nations' consensus. Today, the cultural mismatch between the two blocs continues to raise distrust and fear, while divergent and frequently

conflicting interests trouble cooperation. NATO's approach to achieve security and stability through institutionalized security cooperation clashes with the Russian perception of NATO violating its sphere of interest. Second, for the first time in American history the North Atlantic Treaty permanently bound the United States' foreign policy to European stability. In doing so, the US not only renounced foreign policy preferences that had existed since George Washington's inaugural presidency, it also acknowledged isolationism as a bankrupt policy in a world with an increasingly globalized economy.<sup>1</sup> Permanent global military commitment and the pursuit of a global security agenda have been the logical consequences ever since. The Cold War funneled and constrained the US security agenda by obscuring other ongoing regional conflicts and by limiting the freedom of (military) action due to the omnipresent fear of nuclear escalation. All this gave NATO a clearly defined role and mission.

By the fall of the Berlin Wall, the primary purpose of the alliance had been served. However, realist-school analysts who had predicted the subsequent disintegration of NATO were proven wrong.<sup>2</sup> Instead of following the example of the Warsaw Pact, NATO reiterated its importance by identifying emerging security challenges and the requirement to maintain its status as a powerful instrument to enable international security cooperation.<sup>3</sup> But the question remains: *Quo vadis* NATO?

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley R. Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?: NATO and the Transatlantic Bargain from Truman to Obama* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 3; George Washington, "Transcript of President George Washington's Farewell Address (1796)," *Ourdocuments.gov*, 1796, <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=15&page=transcript>: "The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop."

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security* 25, no. 1 (2000): 5.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (July 1, 1990): 5, doi:10.2307/2538981.

This thesis deals with NATO's dual role as defense alliance and global security provider, and it seeks to answer the question: Can NATO develop its agenda to support the national interests of all 28 member nations?

In order to develop options for the future of NATO in a comprehensive geopolitical context, this paper will focus on both the challenges that the twenty-first century poses for a desirable global security architecture and the individual and common security interests of the NATO member nations. Defining the environment and clarifying objectives helps to construct the whole picture of implications and opportunities for the future NATO structure and commitment, or in other words: the NATO Level of Ambition.<sup>4</sup>

This paper will first discuss contemporary geopolitical realities that describe the strategic context of NATO since the end of the Cold War through the first decade and a half of the twenty-first century. It will include the recent development of emerging powers and contested hotspots. While the discussion is kept open intentionally to apply globally, the two most salient theatres with geostrategic relevance are Europe and Asia-Pacific. As a result, this paper will primarily revolve around global issues in these two regions.

After World War II the main purposes of NATO were to contain the power ambitions of the USSR in Europe and to win the Cold War by being prepared for a possible military conflict. Since the end of the familiar East-West division and its accompanying ideological, political, and military rivalry, the alliance has undergone a continual process of transformation.<sup>5</sup> Due to the perceived disappearance of conventional military threats in the Euro-Atlantic area, this transformation has led

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<sup>4</sup> Dean A. Nowowiejski, "NATO's Level of Ambition Beyond Strategic Reach," *JFQ: Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 69 (2013): 73.

<sup>5</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*. (Brussels: NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, 2006), 9.

NATO to the role of a regional, out-of-area-stability provider with a significantly extended understanding of modern security requirements.<sup>6</sup> “Strategic Concept 2010” marks the latest iteration of NATO’s strategic outlook and represents the members’ commonly agreed-upon perception of the global security environment.<sup>7</sup> Recent operations in Afghanistan and Libya have not only challenged the member nations’ capabilities and will to project military power and security interests, but they also provided a vast framework to intensify security cooperation with non-NATO nations and forge coalitions that nurtured the idea of NATO as a global-security provider. Global-security partnerships are one means of achieving more stability, but beyond the status of a partnership, a high level of congruent security interests, shared ideas and values, a common threat perception, the need to provide cost-efficient security, and sometimes, simply regional affiliation all generate incentives to expand the NATO area of influence beyond the scope of the original Washington Treaty. Expanding and deepening the existing partnership programs as well as offering membership to aspirant nations might serve the requirements of the 28 member nations, but it would continue to burden the Alliance’s ability to find compromise and a coherent strategy for future security challenges. These challenges are not remote. They are clear and present, and in some cases they (re-)emerge with unanticipated intensity, often from casually neglected sources. Recent Russian neo-expansionism might be the most significant example.

While Russia’s European-power ambitions at best are unclear, the immediate security concerns of NATO member nations have re-emerged.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*, 16.

<sup>7</sup> “Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation” (NATO’s Public Diplomacy Division, November 19, 2010), <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> The Russian Security Council stresses the defensive character of the new Russian military doctrine 2014. It recognizes NATO as her greatest security risk. “TASS: Russia - Putin Endorses Updated Version of Russia’s Military Doctrine,” accessed January 14, 2015, <http://itar-tass.com/en/russia/769463>.

Especially new NATO members have not enjoyed the same level of collective security the older members realized during the Cold War. Those who share at least some similarities with other countries within the Russian sphere of influence, such as Georgia or Ukraine, remain concerned about the resolve of alliance partners. Understandably, these nations have an inherently different perception of security requirements than older NATO members, and therefore show limited enthusiasm for a security agenda that fails to address the perceived immediate threat.<sup>9</sup> The credibility and effectiveness of NATO deterrence, and with that the existence of the alliance, is at stake once again.

This basic tension within NATO demonstrates that international politics and security considerations are principally driven by national interests and very local security concerns. Thus, it is of particular value to gain inside knowledge of member nations' motivations and their interests in influencing the general political and military focus of the Alliance. This paper seeks to compare and contrast the themes of national interests and prevailing security concerns for those NATO member nations that dominate contemporary NATO policy, either by their strategic contributions, or by sticking out due to their geopolitical situations and respective threat perceptions.

In accordance with treaty requirements, decisions in NATO must be made by consensus. While the least common denominator might become the least desirable solution to a politically heterogeneous situation, the added value of NATO has always rested on the ability and the will to overcome these differences. Therefore, member nations' perceptions of national security requirements have significant influence on achievable compromises. In this respect, Bismarck's appreciation of politics as *the art of the possible* remains a truism for NATO's security agenda. At the same time, potential new-member nations and those longer-standing

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<sup>9</sup> Bernd Riegert, "NATO Needs to Rethink its Strategy," Deutsche Welle, May 6, 2014.



nations already aligned with the norms and values of the alliance will find themselves in a struggle to subdue their national interests and procedures to meet criteria required to become NATO membership candidates.



## Chapter 1

### NATO in Strategic Context

NATO was created for three reasons: to defend against Soviet aggression, contain the communist sphere of influence, and to create stability by preventing future war in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

The distribution of global power after WWII significantly changed with the bipolar global order. Germany would not play a major role for the foreseeable future, British military resources were depleted and its economy was basically bankrupt, and France had only formally been invited to become a member of the Allied Control Commission after a humiliating defeat in 1940.<sup>2</sup> The United States and the Soviet Union remained as great powers with the ambition to secure their spheres of influence from foreign incursion. Two focal areas, Europe and Asia, remained the theatres of great-power politics during the Cold War.

#### **Europe**

In Europe, the Western-oriented nations had failed to substantially build their own security and defense identity.<sup>3</sup> Instead, resolve and capability in countering the Soviet Union resided mainly in the US nuclear deterrent and conventional defense capabilities provided by the Americans. Throughout the Cold War, the European Alliance nations accepted their role as junior partners in a conflict with the other the super-power over their own territory. This was partly due to post-WWII concerns about Germany reemerging as the greatest European power and fear of German leadership ambitions that would threaten the status of major nations, namely France and Great Britain. What followed was an institutional focus on cooperation and politics in the fields of economy

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley R. Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?: NATO and the Transatlantic Bargain from Truman to Obama* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 4–7.

<sup>2</sup> Serhii Plokhyy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace* (New York: Viking, 2010), 9–10.

<sup>3</sup> Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?*, 4–5.

and energy. The European Economic Community (Treaty of Rome, 1957) and later the European Union (Maastricht Treaty, 1992) were the logical developments that fostered the process of European integration.

Perhaps this economic activity explains the existing imbalance between the EU's political ambitions and its military capabilities and strategy. While the ideas of a common defense policy date back to the creation of the Western European Union (WEU) in 1948, NATO dominated the agenda and remained the main forum for consultation and dialogue on security.<sup>4</sup> After 2000, the EU has formally taken over crisis-management functions from the WEU, agreed to a defined security environment, and acknowledged the political implications for European security. The underlying document *A Secure Europe in a Better World* endorsed a security strategy for Europe in 2003 for the first time.<sup>5</sup> Eventually, the EU developed the *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP), which came into force through the endorsement of the Lisbon Treaty (2009).<sup>6</sup> By 2010, the WEU had "therefore accomplished its historical role."<sup>7</sup> Since then, the CSDP seeks to enhance defense capabilities, strengthen the defense industry, and improve its own reputation.<sup>8</sup>

The relative military weakness of Europe as a whole has a number of explanations. First, American engagement after WWII reduced the overall incentive for these nations to accept developing the capability to

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<sup>4</sup> The WEU assumed leadership for a number of smaller crisis management operations former Yugoslavia (Albania, Croatia, and Kosovo). <http://www.weu.int/History.htm#5>, accessed 29 January 2015.

<sup>5</sup> European Union, "A Secure Europe in a Better World - European Security Strategy," December 12, 2003, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> European Union External Action, *About CSDP – Overview*, [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/about-csdp/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/about-csdp/index_en.htm), accessed 29 January 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Statement of the Presidency of the Permanent Council of the WEU on behalf of the High Contracting Parties to the Modified Brussels Treaty – Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, WEU 31 March 2010, [http://www.weu.int/Declaration\\_E.pdf](http://www.weu.int/Declaration_E.pdf), accessed 29 January 2015.

<sup>8</sup> European Union External Action, *About CSDP – Overview*.

defend Europe on their own.<sup>9</sup> While the Cold War clearly defined Europe's security agenda, US conventional forces and the nuclear umbrella, together with native military means, countervailed the Warsaw Pact threat and thus attenuated further European defense efforts. Second, after the end of the Cold War, a general perception of low threat of attack against, or war within, Europe, as well as claiming the so-called peace dividend, further sharpened the contrast between American and European military capabilities. Third, the European understanding of security always has had a regional focus at best. Early during the Balkan crises in the 1990s, European polities even then struggled to engage outside their immediate defense parameters. Today, this understanding has certainly changed, and the CSDP formalizes this development. Nevertheless, European security policy persists with a strong regional focus and no ambitions for global-power projection. Fourth, the global financial crisis of 2008, and subsequently the European debt crisis, reduced the leeway for increased defense spending or even a more unconstrained political discussion about the ambitions of the EU as *the* regional-security institution. NATO, with its well-established capabilities, resources, and reach made replication of existing entities and parallel structures with redundant capabilities to serve only the EU barely attractive.<sup>10</sup> The anticipated financial and political cost was assessed as unreasonable given the prevailing perception of threat. The 2014/2015 Ukraine crisis and the economic war of sanctions against Russia, however, have the potential to permanently change this perception.

However, with NATO already in place and the US eventually standing in for its military shortfalls, the EU primarily focuses its efforts

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<sup>9</sup> Stephanie C. Hofmann, *European Security in NATO's Shadow: Party Ideologies and Institution Building* (Cambridge, [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 65.

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Van Orden, "The Tide Begins to Turn on the EU's Military Ambitions," *The Telegraph*, December 9, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10505688/The-tide-begins-to-turn-on-the-EUs-military-ambitions.html>.

on soft-power instruments (comprehensive approach) by primarily using its economic weight.<sup>11</sup> Its member nations' individual interests and their will to achieve consensus or compromise limit the political influence that the EU can exert. The quality of political compromises achieved will define common objectives in foreign policy that can convey a coherent and reliable political strategy. However, the re-emergence of Russian power ambitions can have a catalytic effect on both the resolve of the EU members to act with a coherent foreign policy and a reconsideration of the military requirements and posture to independently counter an imminent threat.

### **Asia - Pacific**

With the defeat of Japan in the Pacific theatre in 1945, no major player evolved to fill the power vacuum. For that reason, the USSR also sought to expand its communist sphere of influence into the region. The military confrontations and proxy wars of Korea and Vietnam were the consequence of a lack of regional coherence and cooperation that Europe experienced after WWII. Unlike in Europe, the US and a defeated Japan were not able to propose an alliance built on common values and norms, arguably due to the fundamentally different cultures and the vast socio-economic gap.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the US continued to build a series of bilateral agreements to knit a dense fabric of American-Asian interconnectedness and interdependency to promote stability and prevent Soviet expansion. Only after 1961 was the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) and later (1967) its successor organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), formed as a response to the perceived communist

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<sup>11</sup> As seen during Operation Unified Protector: Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO After Libya.," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 4 (August 7, 2011): 2–6.

<sup>12</sup> Unlike NATO, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) never developed the coherence and prestige to become an effective regional security organization: Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin Press, 2011), 150–151.

threat.<sup>13</sup> Many parallels exist between the European Union (EU) and ASEAN, particularly the predominant economic focus of the organization and the slowly developing security agenda with a primarily regional focus.<sup>14</sup> The ASEAN security strategy "ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint" was ratified in 2009 and stresses the defensive character of the security cooperation.<sup>15</sup> It does not pretend the strict framework of a defense alliance, but promotes a cooperative approach to maintain peace and stability in the region. However, current Chinese power ambitions in the South China Sea, its struggle for resources, lines of communications, and influence, as well as the unresolved issues of Taiwan and other territorial disputes lead to the conclusion that the security efforts of ASEAN will be too little and too late to balance the military and economic capability of China. Further, ASEAN does not have the weight of a nuclear power as the member nations abstained from obtaining this capability in 1995.<sup>16</sup> In the absence of an effective regional architecture comparable to either NATO or the EU, the US is the *de facto* nation with both the capabilities and the historical proclivities necessary to assume the role of regional balancer and "honest broker."<sup>17</sup>

But the US is not the only state with an interest in maintaining the status quo and balancing the power of China. Rather, all Western countries are well advised not to lose their influence in Southeast Asia due to their dependence on goods and services from that region. In turn, this suggests developing a coherent Western grand strategy, and from a military perspective, NATO is currently the only organization that has the potential reach and level of integration to support this endeavor.

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<sup>13</sup> ASEAN, *ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint*. (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2009), 1.

<sup>14</sup> ASEAN, *ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint*, 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> ASEAN, *ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint*, 3-8.

<sup>16</sup> ASEAN, Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, 15 December 1995, <http://www.asean.org/news/item/treaty-on-the-southeast-asia-nuclear-weapon-free-zone>, accessed 29 January 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Dakota (ed.) Wood, *2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength - Assessing America's Ability to Provide for the Common Defense* (Washington, D.C: The Heritage Foundation, 2015), 37.

In this context, the role of Australia is of particular interest. Since WWII, Australia has been an ally and supporter of US interests in the South Pacific region. The island campaign against Japan was initially enabled through substantial support and basing of US forces on Australian territory. As a member of the Commonwealth and with a shared western set of democratic norms and values, Australia would perfectly match the membership criteria of NATO. More than ever, Australia possesses the geopolitical relevance to institutionalize a strategic partnership to the US and other NATO nations. This partnership serves mutual interest, as Australia has an interest in limiting Chinese influence in its neighborhood, but is lacking the political, economic, and military power to do so. Although large in territorial size, Australia is simply too small a power to balance Chinese regional power ambitions on its own or to lead a cooperative of regional nations—like ASEAN. Thus, it is of strategic importance and mutual interest to strengthen the bond between NATO and Australia.

### **NATO in History - Its Three Phases**

NATO's strategy has undergone three phases since its inception. Minor emphasis will be given to the Cold War period, but the events after the fall of the Berlin Wall indicate NATO's capability to transform and respond to new security challenges. The post-Cold War period is marked by a cultural change towards an extended understanding of security that reaches beyond NATO territory. The latest phase is marked by the dramatic changes of global security perception after the 9/11 terror attacks.

However, re-emergent Russian power ambitions that manifested themselves in the Ukraine crisis might once again herald a new phase in NATO strategy. Understanding NATO's ability to reinvent itself will foster deduction of credible options for future NATO ambitions.



In 1967, NATO approached its twentieth anniversary and France had just decided to withdraw from the integrated military structure. Taking this as a prompt for re-considering NATO's relevance, an expert group led by the Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel was tasked by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) "to examine the development of political events as it affects the purposes of the Alliance [and] the consequent future tasks of the Alliance."<sup>18</sup> The report stressed two very elementary findings. First, "[t]he North Atlantic Treaty area cannot be treated in isolation from the rest of the world. Crises and conflicts arising outside the area may impair its security either directly or by affecting the global balance"<sup>19</sup>, and second, NATO needs to "constantly adapt [...] itself to changing conditions."<sup>20</sup>

In 2010, the Albright Report reaffirmed these findings and stressed NATO's two core functions: "the first to maintain the strength and solidarity required to deter aggression and the second to pursue a more stable long term political environment."<sup>21</sup> Almost fifty years later, the Harmel Report still describes the struggle to determine the Alliance's very purpose and the continual evolution that NATO has undergone since. While painful at times, it marks the strategic ability of the Alliance to continuously adapt to the global-security situation. Some might call it cynical, but by doing so, NATO satisfies its members' desire for stability – the stability of continual change. This stability both seeks and follows political change.

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<sup>18</sup> "NATO - Harmel Report," accessed February 26, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/80830.htm>. The 'archival description' about the special group's meetings, work-in-progress and products is available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_archives/20111114\\_Harmel\\_Archival\\_Description.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_archives/20111114_Harmel_Archival_Description.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> "NATO - Official Text: The Future Tasks of the Alliance: Report of the Council ('The Harmel Report'), 13-Dec.-1967," para. 15, accessed February 26, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_26700.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26700.htm).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., para. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Madeleine Albright, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, May 17, 2010, 7, <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>; "NATO - Official Text: The Future Tasks of the Alliance: Report of the Council ('The Harmel Report'), 13-Dec.-1967," para. 5.



With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO had served its original purpose. From this perspective, NATO's fundamental challenge then was to shift from defending common territory to defending the common interests of Alliance members in the new unipolar global order. With the US the only remaining superpower, new tasks and responsibilities had to be found in order to keep the alliance meaningful as a political entity. With no immediate threat of attack against NATO territory, it was clear that "[i]f NATO does not go out of area, it will go out of business."<sup>22</sup>

The end of the Cold War brought previously concealed conflicts to the forefront, and institutionalists such as Robert Keohane believe that "avoiding military conflict in Europe after the Cold War depends greatly on whether the next decade is characterized by a continuous pattern of institutionalized cooperation."<sup>23</sup> Two main sources of conflict were imminent. First, the fear of the new distribution of power within Europe left doubt about a viable political order and internal stability. This call for institutionalization was effectively addressed by both the process of European political / economic integration, and the eastward expansion of NATO and EU. Second, where these measures could not be effective, security deteriorated and resulted in instability at the margins of both NATO and EU. This second source of conflict had become reality with the Balkan Wars after 1991. Europe's capabilities to manage conflicts in its neighborhood and provide stability through military means did not suffice. Only after US interventions under the NATO umbrella did effective peace enforcement become possible. European NATO nations had learned the hard way that security through stability can only be

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<sup>22</sup> Richard G. Lugar, "NATO: Out of Area or Out of Business," Remarks Delivered to the Open Forum of the U.S. State Department, August 2, 1993; and Ronald D. Asmus, Richard L. Kugler, and F. Stephen Larrabee, "Building a New NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 4 (September/October 1993), 28-40.

<sup>23</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "The Diplomacy of Structural Change: Multilateral Institutions and State Strategies," in Helga Haftendorn and Christian Tuschhoff, eds., *America and Europe in an Era of Change* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1993), p. 53.

achieved by moving the focus *out-of-area*; and NATO eventually demonstrated its limited expeditionary capability during operations SFOR (Stabilization Force) and KFOR (Kosovo Force) in the former Yugoslavia.

The violent disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s provides evidence in support of two fundamental assumptions. First, building a dense network of institutions reduces the likelihood of military conflict within Europe. Second, NATO can play a significant role as a stability provider. The Alliance has the principal ability to act as a catalyst to promote a coherent security agenda in the European region and beyond.

In order to capture the lessons learned during Operation ALLIED FORCE and the momentum of the newly gained self-confidence, NATO's heads of state and governments launched a Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) during the 1999 Washington summit. It aimed at non-Article 5 crisis-response operations (CRO) that were assumed smaller in scale, but longer in duration. The new security environment would impose new interoperability challenges as non-NATO force contributions were to be expected. DCI stressed the importance of "the full spectrum of Alliance missions regardless of differences in national defense structures."<sup>24</sup> The aim was to encourage NATO members to organize, train, and equip robust, highly mobile, interoperable, and sustainable expeditionary forces.<sup>25</sup> In the process of achieving this new capability for NATO, 9/11 occurred.

Once again, NATO's self-image and understanding of security priorities had to change. For the first time in history, NATO invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and declared attacks against the US an attack against all NATO members.<sup>26</sup> In an immediate reaction, NATO and partner nations "pledged to undertake all efforts to combat the

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<sup>24</sup> "NATO Press Release NAC-S(99)69 - 25 April 1999," para. 3, accessed February 26, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99s069e.htm>.

<sup>25</sup> "NATO Press Release NAC-S(99)69 - 25 April 1999," 4.

<sup>26</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*. (Brussels: NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, 2006), 20.

scourge of terrorism. The [Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism] is a manifestation of this resolve. It was launched by the North Atlantic Council in consultation with Partners at the Prague Summit in 2002.”<sup>27</sup> Driven by the 2001 terrorist attacks, rather than the search for stability at NATO’s margins in Europe as the dominant security challenge outside its territory, the Alliance was now challenged by globalized terrorism recognized as an immediate threat for all member nations. Since then, the *Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism* (PAP-T) has remained the main platform to coordinate the joint effort of NATO members, PfP-partners, and other nations against terrorism.<sup>28</sup> The second rather important aspect of this initiative was to promote transatlantic security consultation and information-sharing. While the general perception of threat certainly differed per member nation, the nation most affected by terrorism was obviously the US. But as terror attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) later demonstrated, other Alliance members were subject to this new threat as well. One might argue that only the Spanish and British contribution to the newly proclaimed US “war on terror” resulted in new attacks, but both the solidarity of the alliance and the common perception of threat resulted in a coherent change of security priorities.<sup>29</sup> For the first time, out-of-area did not only mean that NATO was dealing with security challenges at its European borders. The recognition of international terrorism as global phenomenon fostered resolve to engage threats beyond previous ambitions: “NATO has recognized that the best (and at times the only) defense against such remote dangers is to tackle them at their source.”<sup>30</sup> By proactively preventing security threats where they developed, NATO followed the US

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<sup>27</sup> “NATO - Topic: The Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T),” accessed March 7, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50084.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50084.htm).

<sup>28</sup> “NATO - Topic: The Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T),”.

<sup>29</sup> George W. Bush, “President Bush’s Address to a Joint Session of Congress,” September 21, 2001, <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>.

<sup>30</sup> Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, “Global NATO.,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 5 (October 9, 2006): 105–13.

example as laid out in the National Security Strategy 2002.<sup>31</sup> Unlike any other military Alliance, due to its level of political integration and military standardization, NATO was particularly well suited for the US approach towards a proactive security policy. Analysts noted at that time: “As the world's premier multinational military organization, comprising many prosperous nations with a vested interest in maintaining global stability, NATO is uniquely suited to meeting such demands.”<sup>32</sup>

In that respect, the 2002 Prague Summit marked a turning point towards NATO’s transformation that touched “on virtually every aspect of Alliance activity.”<sup>33</sup> Apart from reforms to the political and military structures,<sup>34</sup> NATO defined commitments towards more military capabilities and capacities of the European member nations. The Prague Capability Commitments covered 400 specific items in the fields of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) defense, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR), and target acquisition, air-to-ground surveillance (AGS), deployability, secure command, control, and communications (C<sup>3</sup>), combat effectiveness (including precision-guided munitions (PGM) and suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD), strategic air and sealift, and air-to-air refueling (AAR). The aim was to individually and collectively become more capable to face the new security environment.<sup>35</sup> The most obvious signal for this effort was made during this summit as well. Prague confirmed NATO’s commitment to the Afghanistan mission as an Alliance operation.<sup>36</sup> Thus, Prague was the starting point visible to all members and the global audiences that a new

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<sup>31</sup> George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy 2002” (The White House, Washington, September 17, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> Daalder and Goldgeier, “Global NATO.”

<sup>33</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook.*, 20.

<sup>34</sup> “NATO - Prague Summit Declaration,” *Prague Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Prague on 21 November 2002*, November 21, 2002, para. 16, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> “NATO - Topic: Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) (Archived),” accessed March 7, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50087.htm?](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50087.htm?)

<sup>36</sup> “NATO - Prague Summit Declaration,” para. 14.

security organization had emerged to meet the security challenges of the twenty-first century. Consequently, “[i]n August 2003, NATO formally took charge of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which [was] tasked with helping to provide security in post-Taliban Afghanistan.”<sup>37</sup>

Later, “[a]nti-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa benefited indirectly from the extra-regional focus of the new-look NATO as well” and raised the appreciation of NATO as global security provider.<sup>38</sup> In the wake of the 2004 Istanbul summit, then Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer noted that

[NATO] missions are changing. Projecting stability has become a precondition for our security. NATO’s core function of defending its members can no longer be achieved by maintaining forces only to defend our borders. We simply can no longer protect our security without addressing the potential risks and threats that arise far from our homes. Afghanistan is a case in point. Either we tackle these problems when and where they emerge, or they will end up on our doorstep.<sup>39</sup>

The next logical step was to build or foster NATO’s global-partnership network. “Since NATO is having its operations over a strategic distance, it means that there is also the need for a dialogue with other interested nations,” NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer declared at the Sofia meeting of NATO foreign ministers in 2006. The Bucharest Summit declaration of 2008 stresses the high value of “expanding and varied relationships with other partners around the

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<sup>37</sup> Daalder and Goldgeier, “Global NATO.”

<sup>38</sup> Anti-Piracy operations ALLIED PROVIDER (2008) and ALLIED PROTECTOR (2009) around the Horn of Africa evolved into Operation OCEAN SHIELD (2009-): “NATO - Topic: Counter-Piracy Operations,” accessed March 7, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_48815.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_48815.htm); Quote: “Australia Joining NATO Must Be Carefully Considered,” accessed March 5, 2015, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/comment/australia-joining-nato-must-be-carefully-considered-20140904-10c91n.html>.

<sup>39</sup> Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “NATO’s Istanbul Summit: New Mission, New Means - Speech by NATO Secretary General at the Royal United Services Institute” (London, June 18, 2004), <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040618a.htm>.

globe.”<sup>40</sup> Although NATO would become a more global Alliance, or an alliance with global partners, this would not imply an imminent NATO expansion towards the Asia-Pacific region. Here the regional focus of the existing NATO partnership programs significantly hampered furthering the Alliance’s global reach. The US certainly had the capability to unilaterally exert its influence, but NATO instead followed the US example of addressing the challenges of globalization through expanding partnerships.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, there has not been any NATO ambition towards global military power-projection capability. In this respect, the US did not get the full support for global security interests, but the National Security Strategy (NSS) 2006 did not envision any other NATO approach.

### **Strategic Concept 2010 (Lisbon Summit)**

The heads of states and governments endorsed the Strategic Concept 2010 during the NATO summit in Lisbon, which remains the NATO strategy.<sup>42</sup> In many ways, this concept, again, was the political expression of the compromise that had to be found among the member nations’ interests. The new strategy had become necessary after the 1999 strategy no longer reflected the emerging security requirements of the twenty-first century.

With the 1999 summit in Washington DC, NATO had embarked on a strategy that was regionally focused on the Euro-Atlantic area. The strategic focus was defense and deterrence, but the strategy also stressed the necessary capabilities of crisis management (CM) and building

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<sup>40</sup> “NATO Summit Bucharest 2008,” para. 35, accessed February 25, 2015, [http://www.summitbucharest.ro/en/doc\\_201.html](http://www.summitbucharest.ro/en/doc_201.html).

<sup>41</sup> George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy 2006” (The White House, Washington, March 16, 2006), 47–48.

<sup>42</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “*Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.*”, accessed February 25, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>.



partnerships.<sup>43</sup> This strategy had three main factors of significance that describe the context for NATO at the time and continued through the first decade of the twenty-first century. First, after the end of the Cold War, Russia did not pose a significant threat to European security. Much more, the main goal was to develop NATO-Russian relations “on the basis of common interest, reciprocity and transparency to achieve a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area based on the principles of democracy and co-operative security.”<sup>44</sup> However, ignoring the Russian sphere of interest and underestimating its long-term resolve to defend it,<sup>45</sup> NATO at the same time stressed “strengthening its distinctive partnership” with Ukraine.<sup>46</sup> Second, the experience of instability in the Balkans affected European security and underlined NATO’s need to provide a military capability for out-of-area stability operations. Inspired by that realization, NATO embarked on a European CM strategy outside the Alliance’s territory. Taking the responsibility for the ISAF operation in 2003 was a visible and necessary proof of concept for this new ambition. Third, and contrary to expanding the scope of their security interests, European NATO member nations took the anticipated post-Cold War peace dividend as an opportunity to consolidate their budgets. While reducing defense spending in the early 90s perfectly suited the reduced requirements absent the Cold War threat, the trend of diminishing defense budgets had not been stopped in the wake of new security challenges. The mismatch among ambition, capability, and funding became crucial for the Alliance at the end of the last decade.

In 2009, during the Straßbourg/Kehl summit marking NATO’s

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<sup>43</sup> “NATO - Official Text: The Alliance’s Strategic Concept Approved by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C., 24-Apr.-1999 (NATO - Strategic Concept 1999),” accessed February 24, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_27433.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm).

<sup>44</sup> NATO - Strategic Concept 1999., para. 36.

<sup>45</sup> George F. Kennan, “A Fateful Error,” New York Times, February 5, 1997, p. A23.

<sup>46</sup> NATO - Strategic Concept 1999., para. 37.

sixtieth anniversary, however, fundamental questions regarding future ambition were not touched. The summit was mainly committed to the anniversary itself, the operation in Afghanistan, and selecting Anders Fogh Rasmussen as new Secretary General. Further, Straßbourg/Kehl served as an opportunity to repair transatlantic relations with the (then new) Obama administration, after this relationship had suffered from dismay over the US-led "coalition-of-the-willing" commitment to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Nevertheless, two significant issues fell within the summit's context. First, France declared its decision to re-commit to the NATO military structure after de Gaulle's decision to withdraw in 1966. After more than three decades, French president Nikolas Sarkozy decided to reintegrate allocated military forces into NATO's command structure. Second, in the wake of OIF, the general perception of diverting security interests created the incentive to seek a new strategic concept for NATO. The 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States had placed the fight against international terrorism at the top of the security agenda, and NATO's "transformation process that characterized the first ten years after the end of the Cold War era took on a more coherent dimension and greater urgency."<sup>47</sup> In addition, the 2008 war in Georgia underlined the requirement to find a viable way to pursue security interests in the European and Caucasus region while recognizing the relevance of Russian "privileged interests" within her sphere of interest in the "near abroad."<sup>48</sup> Within this realm, discussions about the NATO membership of Georgia and Ukraine, as well as plans for establishing a ballistic missile defense capability, contained a great deal of conflict potential with Russian vital interests.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the overall aim of

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<sup>47</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook.*, 9.

<sup>48</sup> "Interview - Issues Facing NATO On Its 60th Birthday - NYTimes.com," accessed February 24, 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/world/slot3\\_20090226.html?scp=2&sq=strassbourg%20keh1%20summit&st=cse&r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/world/slot3_20090226.html?scp=2&sq=strassbourg%20keh1%20summit&st=cse&r=0).

<sup>49</sup> "NATO Summit Bucharest 2008," para. 23; "The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation 2010 - English Transscript," *Carnegie - Middle East Center*, February 5,



the new NATO strategy was to reconcile the different security interests and threat perceptions that were inherent within the alliance, but also in its relation to Russia. In preparation of the new strategy and the Lisbon summit, a group of experts chaired by Madeleine Albright developed a number of recommendations for the new strategy.<sup>50</sup> This report formed the basis for the 2010 Strategic Concept and laid out a number of recommendations for NATO's future development. First, partnerships with other states and institutions needed to improve. Thus, the list and scope of partnership activities was to expand with activities not be restricted to a purely military agenda.<sup>51</sup> NATO and the EU were to develop a comprehensive and cost-efficient security strategy, built on "the entire range of the institutions' mutual activities."<sup>52</sup> Further, the report recognized the shortcomings in the UN framework's utility for Alliance security interests and therefore stressed the need for improved institutional cooperation in the fields of security for UN civilian personnel, support of other regional humanitarian interventions, or to "respond positively to UN Security Council Resolution 1325, concerning the role of women in security and peace."<sup>53</sup> The OSCE was considered the provider of expert advice and response to soft security challenges, to include conventional arms control and other confidence-building measures. These soft-power capabilities were to become a future NATO competency. Second, the report stressed that NATO and Russia must re-engage cooperatively on Russian security interests, while reassuring the Alliance members. In this context, the partnership relations between NATO and Georgia/Ukraine were to receive a lower priority and employ "crisis management mechanisms to assess and monitor security

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2010, para. 8, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2010/02/05/text-of-newly-approved-russian-military-doctrine>.

<sup>50</sup> Madeleine Albright, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement* (Albright Report), May 17, 2010, 7, <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> Albright Report, 22–23.

<sup>52</sup> Albright Report, 24.

<sup>53</sup> Albright Report, 25.

developments.”<sup>54</sup> Third, the report recognized the strategic value and potential of the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) programs, but underlined their meaning as long-term investment into regional cooperation and stability. So far, especially the MD accomplishments were assessed as “modest.”<sup>55</sup> In this geographical area, NATO’s main interest is (re-)establishing of a peaceful order, countering terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons (to include WMD), and energy security. Exercising restraint in establishing a common strategic vision would allow for more mutual understanding and trust. This would only pay off in longer terms, and proposing such restraint demonstrated that NATO’s means and ambitions in the region of the extended Middle East were limited. Lastly, the report recommended enhancing NATO’s global partnership capabilities with other states and organizations including the Organization of American States, Gulf Cooperation Council, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Overall, the Albright report built the basis for the 2010 Strategic Concept with its special focus on building security and stability through regional and global partnerships. But in fact, the new Strategic Concept does not conclusively answer the question about actual military ambition and how NATO will provide security in practical terms if partnerships fail.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, the new concept acknowledges the requirement to update the strategic outlook of the alliance, provide a shared vision of security challenges,<sup>57</sup> and correct the distorted perception twenty-first century security challenges. Facing a reemerging Russia, Luis Simón’s

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<sup>54</sup> Albright Report, 27–28.

<sup>55</sup> Albright Report, 28.

<sup>56</sup> The Heads of State and Government agreed to continue to review NATO’s overall defence and deterrence posture: “NATO - Official Text: The Alliance’s Strategic Concept Approved by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C., 24-Apr.-1999,” para. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Albright Report, 5.

analysis points at NATO's mismatch between strategic challenges and operational capabilities:

The crisis management paradigm has come to define the last two decades, which have seen the Alliance engage in military conflicts with relatively low-level adversaries and engage in follow-up state-building enterprises through a combination of military, civilian, security sector reform, political and economic initiatives. The crisis management paradigm was underpinned by Western global strategic and political supremacy, and it has organized the way in which Americans and Europeans have thought about military power over the past twenty-five years.<sup>58</sup>

On the one hand, the dismay about the progress of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations limited most alliance members' appetite for a broader out-of-area commitment of military forces for stabilization and nation building. On the other hand, the overall conviction has grown within most of the NATO nations that military engagement alone will not suffice to match challenges from regional instabilities and security threats emerging from failing states. During the 2009 Munich Security Conference, the German chancellor Angela Merkel stressed NATO's need to embed its military capabilities with the concept of 'Vernetzte Sicherheit' (networked security), which effectively forms the *comprehensive approach*, the NATO definition for a whole-of-government effort in crisis management that holistically coordinates civilian and military instruments for the purpose of stability and security gains.<sup>59</sup> With that, NATO abandoned its proclaimed role as an alliance with sole military purpose, and eventually acknowledged ambitions towards a more comprehensive strategy. This approach

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<sup>58</sup> Luis Simón, "Assessing NATO's Eastern European 'Flank,'" *The US Army War College Quarterly Parameters* 44, no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 77.

<sup>59</sup> Dr. Angela Merkel, "Speech at the 45th Munich Security Conference" (45th Munich Security Conference, Munich, 2009), <https://www.securityconference.de/de/veranstaltungen/munich-security-conference/msc-2009/reden/dr-angela-merkel/>; "NATO - Topic: Comprehensive Approach," accessed February 24, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_51633.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm).

contains the promise of higher strategic effectiveness and a more balanced use of military power—compared to other instruments of national power. In turn, security gains would be achieved with means other than military, and both the acceptability as well as the will for out-of-area commitments amongst NATO member nations would rise.<sup>60</sup> In fact, NATO sometimes tries integrating soft-power means to complement its hard-power capabilities. This approach worked moderately well at the operational level during the counter-insurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The application at the political/strategic level, however, has to be viewed in the international relations context. Here, the approach of a supranational power alliance of democratic nations, led by a de-facto hegemon with a global security scope, is unprecedented in history.

NATO's character ultimately changed from a defense Alliance to a whole-of-all-governments security Alliance. The inherent implications and risks are twofold. First, more than before, consensus regarding security requirements is harder to achieve, as different security perceptions complicate reaching compromise about necessary military and/or political measures. Second, by utilizing other means than military, soft power threatens to weaken the hard power of the Alliance's strategic narrative. Refraining from utilizing military force can have negative impact on the credibility, legitimacy, and prestige of NATO.

As Robert Gilpin points out, “[p]restige is the reputation for power” and he relates this reputation to the capability and will to use hard power.<sup>61</sup> Soft power can certainly complement hard power.<sup>62</sup> But further increase in the prestige of NATO still requires a credible military force—

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<sup>60</sup> “NATO - Topic: Comprehensive Approach,” accessed February 24, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_51633.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm); Albright, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, 6.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 31.

<sup>62</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 22.

and the perceived resolve to use it. Consequently, the notoriously small military contributions of European NATO nations threaten the prestige of this role in two ways. First, as funding in well-organized and trained militaries directly relates to military capability, permanent underfunding will decrease the military capability and capacity that is backing NATO's prestige. Second, the transatlantic asymmetry of military capabilities invites potential adversaries to challenge US resolve for European security concerns.

However, by primarily appealing to liberal ideas of institutionalism, the *comprehensive approach* makes commitment to foreign policy more palatable for many Western-oriented liberal democracies. Nations tired of long and expensive military engagements in nation-building campaigns have to engage in winning the narrative against domestic nationalistic and isolationistic tendencies. Providing supposedly cheap and culturally acceptable soft-power answers to strategic security challenges arguably solves this dilemma. In fact, soft power is supposed to provide both the domestic support needed and a multilaterally acceptable compromise that demonstrates the alliance's coherence and resolve. The question remains, will this level of commitment provide for a long-term solution to NATO's capability as an out-of-area security provider, or even as an effective defense alliance. There are no easy solutions to this dilemma. In the context of the global financial crisis, committing more resources to military capabilities and rebalancing the burden between the US and the European NATO member nations remains high on the agenda. But with tight budgets, one "means of bringing cost and resources into balance is, of course, to reduce foreign-policy commitments. Through political, territorial, or economic retrenchment, a society can reduce the costs of maintaining its international position."<sup>63</sup> While a comprehensive approach has operational value, it contains the mentioned risks at the

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<sup>63</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 192.

strategic and political level. NATO's future will depend on both mitigating different perceptions of military threat and security requirements as well as conveying the ability and will to react to emerging security situations with credible military force.

### **NATO's military capabilities**

NATO's 2014 summit in Wales differed significantly from previous summits. Rather than dealing with out-of-area operations and global outreach, stability in Europe and defending NATO territory determined the agenda. "The main outcome from the 2014 Wales summit was the return of defense and deterrence in Eastern Europe to the center of NATO debates."<sup>64</sup> Although the summit once more ended with a compromise expressing the art-of-the-possible with regard to military or financial contributions to the common security, its outcome demonstrates that a clear and present threat can help in overcoming some of the Alliance's reluctance to invest in its core security. As such, Wales gives a strong signal of NATO's resolve regarding its core task and competency: the defense of the Alliance.

As has happened many times before, NATO nations committed to increase their defense spending and their military capability regarding crisis response and territorial defense. But this time the nations agreed on a concrete guideline for defense spending in relation to their respective GDP. The summit declaration stresses the commitment to sustain or increase the defense expenses explicitly.

"[Allies not meeting the NATO guideline for defense spending committed to] halt any decline in defense expenditure, aim to increase defense expenditure in real terms as GDP grows, [and] aim to move towards the 2% guideline within a decade with a view to meeting their NATO Capability Targets and filling NATO's capability shortfalls. [...] All Allies will ensure that their land, air and maritime forces meet NATO agreed guidelines for

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<sup>64</sup> James Bergeron, "Back To The Future In Wales," *RUSI Journal* 159, no. 3 (July 2014): 4.



deployability and sustainability and other agreed output metrics; ensure that their armed forces can operate together effectively, including through the implementation of agreed NATO standards and doctrines.”<sup>65</sup>

In fact, the agreed guideline of two percent of a member nation’s GDP is the strongest commitment since the end of the Cold War. Before Wales, the strongest language was to “encourage nations whose defense spending is declining to halt that decline and to aim to increase defense spending in real terms.”<sup>66</sup> In this respect, 2014 Wales can be marked as the first post-Cold War summit where Allied heads of state and government (HoSG) eventually agreed on concrete spending goals for their defense budgets and investments. However, the commitment to devote precisely two percent of the GDP for defense (and 20 percent for defense investments within the next ten years<sup>67</sup>) has to be seen in relation to the Cold War (1978) guideline of increasing defense expenditures by three percent in real terms—per year.<sup>68</sup> It remains questionable if the newly agreed-upon level of financial commitment will suffice to respond credibly to the re-emerging ambitions of Russia. For sure, it does not impact the current crisis in Eastern Europe. Even if every nation would adhere to the guideline’s goals, this would hardly create sufficient military power to provide credible short-term response to Russian aggression, without even speaking about NATO’s further security ambitions.

Certainly, European security will continue to depend on the

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<sup>65</sup> “NATO - Official Text: Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales , 05-Sep.-2014,” para. 14, accessed February 25, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

<sup>66</sup> “NATO Summit Bucharest 2008,” para. 26; “NATO Riga 2006 Summit Declaration,” para. 26, accessed February 25, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>.

<sup>67</sup> “NATO - Official Text: Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales , 05-Sep.-2014,” para. 14.

<sup>68</sup> “NATO Mini. Comm. Washington - 30th-31st May, 1978,” para. 24, accessed February 25, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c780530a.htm>.

provision of US military capability, both nuclear and conventional. In this respect, the agreement on guidelines and force commitments is a visible sign of NATO refocusing its security agenda to Europe and its threefold purpose of “collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security.”<sup>69</sup>

Simón notes that “[i]ndeed, by fostering interoperability between the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and the three Baltic States, the British-led Joint Expeditionary Force will help improve the Alliance’s readiness and ability to project maritime and amphibious power through the North and Baltic Seas all the way to the Baltic States. This will represent an important contribution to the security of NATO’s eastern flank.”<sup>70</sup> The HoSG declared that “[i]mproving allies’ capabilities [...] is necessary.”<sup>71</sup> As proven by the lessons from Operation Unified Protector (OUP), the Alliance clearly needs to augment its intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, for instance, but also to use enhanced exercises to build up skills in large-scale conventional maneuver warfare that have atrophied through a decade of countering the Taliban in Afghanistan. It is unclear, however, how this effort to promote specific defense-planning goals would differ from previous attempts to prioritize and spur defense investments among the allies, such as the Prague Capabilities Commitment, the Defence Capabilities Initiative, the Connected Forces Initiative, or Smart Defence.<sup>72</sup>

By augmenting national forces, NATO provides conventional solutions to unconventional threats.<sup>73</sup> It remains questionable if the

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<sup>69</sup> “Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.”

<sup>70</sup> Simón, “Assessing NATO’s Eastern European ‘Flank.’”

<sup>71</sup> “NATO - Official Text: Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales , 05-Sep.-2014,” para. 64.

<sup>72</sup> John R. Deni, “NATO’s New Trajectories after the Wales Summit,” *The US Army War College Quarterly Parameters* 44, no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 61.

<sup>73</sup> It may be too late and too little that “[w]e have tasked the work on hybrid warfare to be reviewed alongside the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan.” in “NATO -



measures announced will suffice to respond to new methods in war like hybrid warfare. In future crisis situations NATO needs the ability to react with more agility to emerging security challenges. The Ukraine crisis has shown how limited NATO's crisis-response capabilities are, and NATO's reaction as given in Wales does not answer the underlying fundamental question: How does NATO respond to similar challenges of nuclear nations employing hybrid warfare to their territorial disputes and in their struggle for access to resources?

From an operational-level perspective, this question becomes even more urgent when considering expanding NATO's ambitions beyond its regional scope, as NATO will face similar military challenges that the US faces today. Anti-access area denial (A2AD) capabilities are aimed at denying Western military forces access and freedom of movement in a given theater of operations. The A2AD challenge includes kinetic (i.e. ballistic and cruise missiles) as well as non-kinetic capabilities (i.e. cyber). Such capabilities are being developed primarily by China and Russia, but are also being exported to countries such as Iran and Syria.<sup>74</sup> Further proliferation to smaller actors and terrorist groups will sharpen the requirements for both a capability to rapidly respond to these new operational challenges as well as the will to budget for it. Recently, NATO has demonstrated neither. The expansion as well as the complexity of the twenty-first century security situation has reduced the ability to achieve robust compromise, and the global economic crisis minimized the leeway for security investments.

### **Strategic risks to NATO's coherence – and how IR theories fail**

At the end of the Cold War, many realist theorists counted the

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Official Text: Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales , 05-Sep.-2014," para. 13.

<sup>74</sup> John Gordon, *The Army's Role in Overcoming Anti-Access and Area Denial Challenges* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013).

months for NATO to dissolve. Obviously, that has not happened.<sup>75</sup>

Balancing the new hegemon did not occur as an immediate effect of the new unipolar political order. Instead, bandwagoning in the form of NATO expansion has proven realists to be wrong.<sup>76</sup>

Theoretical predictions about the development of NATO mainly fail because they predominantly deal with nation states' behavior, rather than institutional change. Alexander Siedschlag in his analysis of common theoretical approaches to predict the future of NATO notes the lack of a suitable framework to make a solid estimate of NATO's development.<sup>77</sup> Every theory uses abstractions to reduce the complexity of the model. In hindsight, most abstractions can be modified for the purpose of the applied model so it matches historical events. The key of analyzing international relations is to understand the interaction between given structures and the institutions. NATO has become both an institution and the structure of multilateral relations, which renders the theoretical models invalid. Thus, predictions in line with existing theories will fail.

Realists expect institutions to develop from an existing structure within the anarchic system that reflects the interests of the individual actors (nation states).<sup>78</sup> Liberal institutionalists argue that establishing institutions bound to common norms of cooperation can overcome the state of anarchy.<sup>79</sup> In fact, most theories of international cooperation use

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<sup>75</sup> At least not yet, as Kenneth Waltz would argue: Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," 18.

<sup>76</sup> John J Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co, 2014), 139.

<sup>77</sup> Alexander Siedschlag, "Der Wandel der NATO – Wissenschaftliche Prognosen und politische Realitäten" (The transformation of NATO – Scientific Predictions and Political Realities), in Gerhard Kümmel, ed., *Wissenschaft, Politik Und Politikberatung: Erkundungen Zu Einem Schwierigen Verhältnis* (Frankfurt am Main ; New York: Lang, 2004), 81–99.

<sup>78</sup> Kenneth N Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2010), 88–90.

<sup>79</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, 1st Princeton Classic Ed, A Princeton Classic Edition (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2005), 7–8.

a modified rational-choice model and micro-economic model logic.<sup>80</sup> In the case of NATO, both realism and liberalism made abstractions in the past that render them unsuited to make an authoritative forecast of the Alliance's behavior within the global political order.

On the one hand, NATO has always been a more than a purely military alliance. Especially after 1991, the Alliance has defined itself with a collective identity of common norms, values, and interests—not simply a cooperation of states with a one-dimensional purpose. Today, NATO actually serves as a transatlantic integrator beyond pure security interests. Thus, realist theory does not fully apply as it expects the self-interest-driven nation state to be the one unitary actor in international relations. On the other hand, neo-liberalism did indeed predict the existence of NATO beyond the end of the Cold War.<sup>81</sup> In order to keep the institutional cost for international cooperation low, continuing the Alliance offered significant benefits, with NATO as an established vehicle for standardization and security cooperation. Rather than engaging in new cooperation initiatives, the existing structures offered a cost-efficient option to maintain a high level of institutionalization. However, NATO changed its *gestalt* and expanded the core function beyond its original purpose. This in turn attracted new members and further enhanced the legitimacy base of the Alliance. Thus, NATO went beyond the anticipated neo-liberal approach of retaining the status quo, creating a new construct of international security cooperation.

For constructivist Alexander Wendt, NATO “seems to have become a collective security system with the expectation of permanence.”<sup>82</sup> International politics take place within different cultures of the security complex. NATO operates within the socially constructed *Kantian culture*

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<sup>80</sup> Siedschlag, “Der Wandel der NATO”

<sup>81</sup> Keohane, *After Hegemony*, 184.

<sup>82</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations 67 (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 301–302.

where *friendship* is a *role structure* that results in peaceful dispute resolution and the rule of mutual aid if threatened by a third party.<sup>83</sup> While this is arguably correct, Wendt's social theory of international politics does not allow for substantial predictions as it bases its findings on retrospective analysis of discourse.<sup>84</sup>

Lacking a proper theoretical framework to appreciate the complexity of institutional change in global politics and in order to provide a prospect to the future development of NATO, Siedschlag proposes to assess the context of the political and strategic environment, analyze the individual member nations' perspectives, and project the major internal and external trends within the security agenda of the Alliance.<sup>85</sup> In altering the source parameters, this process will result in a number of political options of how NATO might develop.

However, some of these parameters are not as variable as they appear. This results in a number of strategic challenges to NATO that have to be addressed effectively, and they are based on historical, structural, political, or economic reasons. Robert Gilpin has identified three main dangers for alliances between one major and a number of smaller nations, which all apply to the twenty-first century NATO. First, "a great power risks to overpay in the long run, as the great power increases its commitments without a commensurate increase in the resources devoted by its allies to finance those commitments."<sup>86</sup> With the US commitment to Europe and the expansion of NATO, the number of potential free-riders has increased. With overall defense budget cuts and the Asian pivot at hand, the US military capability in Europe is stretched thin. US prestige declines in the region and globally. Accordingly, "Allies of the United States around the world [...] have expressed grave misgivings about Washington's capability and resolve to help them

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<sup>83</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 298–299.

<sup>84</sup> Siedschlag, "Der Wandel der NATO"

<sup>85</sup> Siedschlag, "Der Wandel der NATO"

<sup>86</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 193.

defend against escalating security threats.”<sup>87</sup> Thus, a proper balance of resourcing will remain high on the Alliance’s agenda.

Second, “an increase in the number of allies decreases the benefits to each. The probability of defection increases.”<sup>88</sup> The benefits from being a NATO member decrease with the notion that the necessary level of security can be achieved by internal means without foreign interference. If the focus of the security agenda moves away from its particular interest (geographically or politically), nations are inclined to find alternatives in their international relations that are less constraining. Turkey serves as one example for this, as it receives little support in its direct security concerns with Syria. At the same time, Turkey does not benefit economically from its NATO membership. Unlike the majority of European nations, which are NATO and EU members, Turkey does not receive the benefits and prestige of an EU membership. The result is a gradual alienation from NATO programs and policies.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, finding ways and means to retain a coherent vision is needed to both strengthen the cohesion and improve the strategic narrative.

Third, “the minor ally may involve the major ally in disputes of its own from which the latter cannot disengage itself without heavy costs to its prestige.”<sup>90</sup> Although not member nations, in 2008 Ukraine and Georgia were appointed de facto NATO membership candidates.<sup>91</sup> NATO’s lack of commitment to defend Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014/2015 raised heavy doubts about NATO’s resolve to its own commitments. It particularly raised questions about the credibility of US promises to provide European security at its margins, if US security

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<sup>87</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 41.

<sup>88</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 193.

<sup>89</sup> Burak Ege Bekdil, “Turkey Won’t Link Air Defense System to NATO,” *Defense News*, February 19, 2015, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/land/weapons/2015/02/19/turkey-missile-defense-nato-integrate-china-cpmiec-aster-patriot/23667183/>.

<sup>90</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 193.

<sup>91</sup> “NATO Summit Bucharest 2008,” para. 23.

interests are not directly concerned.<sup>92</sup> The inherent loss of prestige not only affects the US, but NATO as a whole. The reassurance expressed through diplomatic exchange and during the Wales Summit in 2014<sup>93</sup> can hardly cover the distrust that exists in the Baltic States and in Poland about the alliance's capability and resolve to counter contemporary threats to their national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Future enlargement of NATO and further extending of security guarantees under Article 5 premises carry significant risk for the credibility, legitimacy, and prestige of the Alliance. Thus, NATO must carefully weigh this risk and the anticipated institutional benefits of future outreach efforts in order to balance overall ambitions and resolve with all member nations' capabilities. The liberal chance of post-Cold War NATO expansion might come to a very realistic stop.

NATO in its seventh decade of existence has become the only multilateral transatlantic cooperative that is built on common values and corporate defense spirit.<sup>94</sup> Uniquely qualified to channel divergent national security interests into coherent policies for crisis management and to catalyze common efforts to enable security burden sharing, NATO has become the only political integrator of transatlantic security policies.<sup>95</sup> Apart from its utility as a purely military alliance, NATO's reach has the potential to integrate politics beyond the scope of security matters. NATO's partnership programs embrace nations that are beyond access of other European organizations that inherently bear only singular purposes or simply reside inside their own regional scope (like the OSCE and the EU). NATO strategy in the twenty-first century must leverage this advantage by reaching out beyond the boundaries of its treaty area. In the age of soft power, NATO also brings military capability. This creates

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<sup>92</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 103.

<sup>93</sup> "NATO - Official Text: Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales , 05-Sep.-2014," para. 2-7, 23; Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 42.

<sup>94</sup> Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?*, 6-7.

<sup>95</sup> Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?*, 13.



opportunities for soft power to further develop.<sup>96</sup> Thus, NATO has become a political element with a more comprehensive meaning, involving all elements of national power in international politics. Squandering this role and achievement will eliminate the future need for NATO. However, all these considerations lose their value if NATO compromises its core capability of defending its own territory.

NATO remains the security provider for Europe. In this respect, the EU with its *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP) is far from the same capability, capacity, and prestige that NATO provides. This is true for both the external threats to NATO's European member nations, as well as the internal security dilemmas and conflicts. NATO must retain its function as coordinator and integrator of Western security politics by promoting its members' democratic values, economic interests, and its own legitimacy and prestige. "Alliance leaders must [...] highlight NATO's many contributions to international stability and peace. Otherwise, the organization could fail to retain the public backing and financial support it must have to perform critical tasks well."<sup>97</sup> Success in developing and promoting this narrative will influence the internal and external legitimacy of NATO. In turn, this will determine the future support for NATO from both sides of the pond.

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<sup>96</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 1st ed (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 6–8.

<sup>97</sup> Albright, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, 5.



## **NATO and its Relation to Russia and China**

The eastward expansion of NATO was the next logical step in an effort to create stability rather than allowing conflicts to emerge from the power vacuum within the buffer-zone between NATO and Russia. For a short moment in history, however, there was the chance that NATO-Russian relations would permanently improve. Deeper cooperation and even Russia joining NATO became thinkable options.<sup>98</sup> This chance was squandered by prioritizing antiquated security interests instead of exercising restraint towards Russia when the Cold War had long-since been won. In this respect, both the fear of the Russian military threat nurtured by decades of the Cold War, and overambitious plans to impose the Western order of liberal-democratic norms and values into former Warsaw Pact countries impeded the development of sustainable peace and order in Europe.

While critics of the enlargement, such as George Kennan, derided the NATO decision, as “the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold-war era” and a “strategic blunder of potentially epic proportions,” the NATO member governments decided otherwise.<sup>99</sup> In July 1997, they agreed to invite the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to join the Alliance, which eventually occurred in 1999.<sup>100</sup> While Kennan’s critique blamed the move for causing a deterioration of US-Russian relations at that time, the practical implications would only surface after the Russian executive power had overcome its strategic paralysis. Russian vital security interests were affected and her

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<sup>98</sup> “SOVIET DISARRAY - Yeltsin Says Russia Seeks to Join NATO - NYTimes.com,” accessed January 29, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/21/world/soviet-disarray-yeltsin-says-russia-seeks-to-join-nato.html?pagewanted=1>.

<sup>99</sup> George F. Kennan, “A Fateful Error,” New York Times, February 5, 1997, p. A23; second quoted text from Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy*, 1st ed (New York: Random House, 2002), 220.

<sup>100</sup> “NATO Press Release - Madrid Summit 1997,” July 8, 1997, para. 5, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-081e.htm>.

international prestige was severely damaged by the subsequent expansion of NATO. In his memoirs, Robert Gates notes that:

[...] from 1993 onward, the West, and particularly the United States, had badly underestimated the magnitude of Russian humiliation in losing the Cold War and then in the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which amounted to the end of the centuries-old Russian Empire. The arrogance, after the collapse, of American government officials, academicians, businessmen, and politicians, in telling the Russians how to conduct their domestic and international affairs (not to mention the internal psychological impact of their precipitous fall from superpower status) had led to deep and long-term resentment and bitterness...Getting Gorbachev to acquiesce to a unified Germany as a member of NATO had been a huge accomplishment. But moving so quickly after the collapse of the Soviet Union to incorporate so many of its formerly subjugated states into NATO was a mistake...NATO expansion was a political act, not a carefully considered military commitment, thus undermining the purpose of the alliance and recklessly ignoring what the Russians considered their own vital national interests.<sup>101</sup>

Adding insult to injury, NATO never managed to convey a credible interest for intensified and robust cooperation. The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) established in 2002 never served this purpose as its concept was the “beginning of a more pragmatic relationship” with an agenda that primarily served NATO’s security agenda.<sup>102</sup> Russia’s interests in Georgia, Ukraine, or Chechnya were either ignored or respective Russian policies criticized mainly because Russian political standards did not meet liberal-democratic norms and values. In his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel Huntington stresses that modernization does not equal Westernization.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, John Mearsheimer called the “West’s triple package of policies—NATO

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<sup>101</sup> Robert Michael Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 157.

<sup>102</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook.*, 27.

<sup>103</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 72–78.

enlargement, EU expansion, and democracy promotion [the] fuel to a fire waiting to ignite.”<sup>104</sup> The lack of Western tolerance and restraint was always received as threatening to Russian culture and social order. Hence, Russia’s leaders have understood NATO as an anti-Russian alliance since the end of the Cold War.<sup>105</sup> Under these conditions, the question has never been *if* a conflict with Russia would occur, but only *when*.<sup>106</sup> Over time, Russia’s strategic assessment has exposed Western military, political, and economical weaknesses. When the EU and NATO continued to expand their spheres of influence, Russia saw the option to defeat this offensive action by a hybrid warfare strategy.

During recent operations (ISAF and OUP) NATO exposed significant deficits in military capabilities, especially in its European members. Further, both operations highlighted the value of A2AD capabilities to limit or deny Western military power-projection capabilities. With the American pivot away from Europe, the EU struggled to agree on coherent internal politics and unified action in foreign affairs. The tight financial leeway that forced national governments to consolidate their budgets further fostered Russian freedom of action in its interests in Ukraine. The Russian success, and subsequently the Western failure to effectively prevent the annexation of Crimea and Donbas, serves as proof-of-concept, further reduces the prestige of NATO and EU, and renders a dark prospect of Russian expansionistic power-politics in the twenty-first century.

Neither NATO and EU, nor UN or OSCE provided the institutional capability to inhibit Russia’s behavior. John Kerry’s early response to the

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<sup>104</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault.,” *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (October 9, 2014): 81.

<sup>105</sup> “Russia’s New Military Doctrine Names NATO as Key Risk | Reuters,” accessed January 14, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/26/us-russia-crisis-military-doctrine-idUSKBN0K40Q120141226>; Bernd Riegert, “NATO Needs to Rethink Its Strategy,” May 6, 2014, <http://www.dw.de/opinion-nato-needs-to-rethink-its-strategy/a-17614273>.

<sup>106</sup> Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault.,” 77–78.

Crimea crisis exposes the different perspectives of international politics: “You just don’t in the 21<sup>st</sup> century behave in 19<sup>th</sup> century fashion by invading another country on completely trumped up pretext.”<sup>107</sup> The mismatch between the anticipated power of liberal institutionalism and the *realpolitik* of the Kremlin became apparent. Although the international sanctions imposed on Russia are assessed to have severe economic impact and effects on the population, they did not change the Kremlin’s policy. Rather, one must expect that Russia will continue to seek opportunities to undermine existing ordering structures and institutions to further its national interests in the near-abroad regions and elsewhere. Russia attempts to further destabilize the fragile cooperation of the Western opponents. Recent Russian offers to support Greek and Hungarian economies, as well as the pipeline deal with Turkey,<sup>108</sup> show the attempt to influence European politics, which in turn could heavily impact EU and NATO coherence.

Apart from the present Ukraine crisis, there are a number of lessons to be learned from Alliance power politics and expanding the sphere of interest and influence. First, the liberal idea of peacefully promoting norms and values, and “winning” nations for this cause by the virtue of own ideals is a myth. Every activity within the sphere of interest of another great power with regional ambitions will cause friction and potential conflict. Second, in a liberal effort to avoid conflict, it is necessary to provide enough incentives to the other great power to come to an arrangement. These incentives encompass the whole realm of power politics, from military coercion to economic cooperation, while trying to win the global strategic narrative using diplomatic influence. Third, if

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<sup>107</sup> Will Dunham, “Kerry Condemns Russia’s ‘Incredible Act of Aggression’ in Ukraine,” *Reuters*, March 2, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/02/us-ukraine-crisis-usa-kerry-idUSBREA210DG20140302>.

<sup>108</sup> “Turkish Stream’ instead of ‘South Stream’: Stanley Reed and Sebnem Arsu, “Russia Presses Ahead With Plan for Gas Pipeline to Turkey,” *NYTimes.com*, January 21, 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/business/international/russia-presses-ahead-with-plan-for-gas-pipeline-to-turkey.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/business/international/russia-presses-ahead-with-plan-for-gas-pipeline-to-turkey.html?_r=0).

choosing to accept risk and resistance, the only way to retain one's prestige is to be resolute in strategic enforcement. In the case of NATO, this would inevitably mean the utilization of military power and the build-up of respective capabilities. Fourth, expansionist restraint must be exercised, if resolve or capability to the Alliance commitment cannot be assured. NATO's need for consent and the weak Article 5 commitment put both resolve and capability into question.<sup>109</sup> Any further NATO expansion without addressing these issues will be futile and effectively invites a challenge to NATO's existence as a whole.

Russia's foreign policy and posture towards NATO and the US creates a working framework for how to counter Western global power ambitions. In Asia, China will use the lessons learned from the Ukraine crisis and apply them in the South China Sea (SCS), where China claims to have vital interests—the Chinese variant of the Russian near-abroad sphere of interest.

China's territorial claims—especially in the SCS—demonstrate its twenty-first century power ambitions. If unchecked by the US, there are no major powers that could effectively thwart these ambitions. This would leave China as the foremost power in Asia. While China continues its ascent to become the world's premier economic power, it is working to undermine political and military resistance to promote its position as regional hegemon.<sup>110</sup>

With the exception of China, all the claimants of the SCS have attempted to justify their claims based on their coastlines and the provisions of UNCLOS. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea seeks to define rights and responsibilities of nations in the world's oceans. It establishes guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the

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<sup>109</sup> Article 5 states that NATO members must consider coming to the aid of an ally under attack. However, it does not guarantee assistance or the use of military force. The Cold War understanding of massive retaliation does not necessarily apply.

<sup>110</sup> Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2014), 93.

management of natural resources. One of the main achievements is the definition of the 200-mile Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) and the nations' rights within.<sup>111</sup> China relies on a mix of historic rights and legal claims, and at the same time remains ambiguous about the meaning of the "nine-dashed line." China demarcates its claims with eleven dashes which first appeared in the "Map of South China Sea Islands" released by the Chinese government in 1947.<sup>112</sup> It was submitted to the UN in May 2009 and immediately opposed by Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia, as it basically claims the whole of the SCS.<sup>113</sup>

The dashed line encompasses approximately 2,000,000 square kilometers of maritime space, an area equal to about 22 percent of China's land area. This constitutes a significant percentage maritime space in the South China Sea. Excluding Taiwan and Pratas Island (referred to by China as *Dongsha Qundao*), the dashed line encompasses approximately 13 square kilometers of land area. This land area includes the three groups of land features within the South China Sea: (1) the Paracel Islands (referred to by China as *Xisha Qundao*), (2) the Spratly Islands (*Nansha Qundao*), and (3) Scarborough Reef (*Huangyan Dao*). The largest of these islands is Woody Island in the Paracel Islands, with an area of 2.4 square kilometers. The dashes likewise encompass numerous submerged features such as Macclesfield Bank (*Zhongsha Qundao*) and James Shoal (*Zengmu Ansha*).<sup>114</sup>

China added a couple of caveats to its claims, which do not directly refer to the EEZ and therefore remain somewhat ambiguous. For example, China reaffirms its sovereignty over all islands in accordance with national law and does not accept any of the procedures provided for dispute-resolution. Further, it does not respect the freedom-of-passage

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<sup>111</sup> The US has not ratified UNCLOS, but has implemented it. Cambodia has not ratified it.

<sup>112</sup> Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "China - Maritime Claims in the South China Sea" (United States Department of State, December 5, 2014), 3, No. 143, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/234936.pdf>.

<sup>113</sup> Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "China - Maritime Claims in the South China Sea", 1.

<sup>114</sup> Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "China - Maritime Claims in the South China Sea", 4.



provisions as it requires foreign states to obtain advance approval for the passage of warships through its "territorial" seas.

Within its sphere of interest, China seeks bilateral agreements that secure access to strategically important resources and influence. At the same time, it undermines initiatives that seek to balance China's power as a regional hegemon. During the 2012 ASEAN summit, for example, China used its relationship with Cambodia to leverage its influence in order to prevent a common and coherent ASEAN summit communiqué denouncing China's ambitions in the SCS.<sup>115</sup> In this respect, ASEAN by its very inception as a geo-political but primarily economic organization, not to mention its notorious lack of coherence, is ill-suited to balance China's ambitions.

Militarily, China is developing the capability to end US supremacy and ability to project power in Asia. While China's military will continue to grow moderately at around 1.8 percent of the GDP,<sup>116</sup> the acquired capacities are "optimized for an anti-access strategy and particularly for attacking regional bases where US forces might be stationed."<sup>117</sup> This speaks for an effective A2AD strategy against US capabilities that secure vital interests of the US in Asia.<sup>118</sup>

Taking these facts and data, the technological development on both sides, and the current US military budget constraints, there remains a significant risk that a purely military US 'Air-Sea-battle' strategy<sup>119</sup> in

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<sup>115</sup> Luke Hunt, "ASEAN Summit Fallout Continues | The Diplomat," July 20, 2012, <http://thediplomat.com/2012/07/asean-summit-fallout-continues-on/>; "Sea Dispute Lingers at ASEAN Summit | Asia | DW.DE | 22.11.2012," accessed March 24, 2015, <http://www.dw.de/sea-dispute-lingers-at-asean-summit/a-16397985>.

<sup>116</sup> IHS Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - China And Northeast Asia," *Defence Budget Overview*, January 28, 2015, <https://janes-ihs-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1303142&Pubabbrev=CNA>.

<sup>117</sup> Sam J. Tangredi, *Anti-Access Warfare: Countering A2/AD Strategies* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2013), 163.

<sup>118</sup> Tangredi, *Anti-Access Warfare: Countering A2/AD Strategies*, 164–166.

<sup>119</sup> Recently renamed to *Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons* (JAM-GC): "Air Sea Battle Name Change Memo - USNI News," accessed March 24, 2015, <http://news.usni.org/2015/01/20/document-air-sea-battle-name-change-memo>.



Asia will become too costly, notwithstanding the implications regarding the embedding of a comprehensive, multilateral security strategy. In fact, the US uses a conventional and nuclear coercion/deterrence strategy through manipulation of China's risk of interfering with US interests.<sup>120</sup> Russia's challenge to America's commitment to its Allies and its resolve of military commitment can serve as a precedent for Chinese strategy in the SCS. The risk of interfering with the US, both militarily and politically, suddenly appears manageable. Thus, Chinese strategy could seek to further discredit US political and military credibility—the US prestige—in Asia. China would assume that the US risk strategy no longer presents an obstacle in a strategic cost-benefit analysis, and it could assess the inherent risk as acceptable.



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<sup>120</sup> Robert Anthony Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 66–67.

## Chapter 2

### Security Requirements in the Twenty-first Century

This chapter comprises an overview of national interest and political ambitions of the individual nations involved in NATO strategy. It not only covers the most relevant current member nations, but also two aspirants that purportedly have a both significant security interests as well as congruent norms and values; Sweden and Australia, the most suitable nations with potential for a NATO membership.

Understanding the individual motivations and the significance of mid-to long-term differences allows a projection of NATO's future strategy.<sup>1</sup> As interests are subject to bargaining (unless they are vital), identifying the transatlantic and transpacific bargaining margins supports this endeavor.

#### **The Member States**

##### **US Interest and the Asian pivot**

Before the end of World War II, the divergent visions for the European post-war order had already become apparent. As early as July 1944, the Allied nations completed negotiations for a post-war economic at Bretton-Woods, New Hampshire. At Teheran (January 1945), the major powers agreed to meet again in Yalta to determine the future political world order.<sup>2</sup> At the Potsdam Conference (7 July through 2 August, 1945), the conflicting interests of the emerging super-powers prohibited a coherent treatment of the four zones of Allied occupation.<sup>3</sup> The two main issues were the Soviet Union insisting on war reparations

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Siedschlag, "Der Wandel der NATO – Wissenschaftliche Prognosen und politische Realitäten (The transformation of NATO – Scientific Predictions and Political Realities)," 2002, <http://www.esci.at/eusipo/natosowi.html>.

<sup>2</sup> "The Tehran Conference, 1943," *U.S. Department of State - Office of the Historian*, accessed May 12, 2015, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/tehran-conf>.

<sup>3</sup> "The Yalta Conference, 1945," *U.S. Department of State - Office of the Historian*, accessed May 12, 2015, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/yalta-conf>.

rather than constructively rebuilding post-war Germany and the lack of power allotted to the Allied Control Commission. Effectively, both of these issues were signs of mutual distrust with the objective to maintain weak power structures in central Europe that later would enable expansionistic ambitions from the East.

The resolve that the US demonstrated by furnishing the Berlin Airlift and extending the offer of economic support to European nations as part of the Marshall Plan were logical signs of the strategic objective of containing Soviet expansion. In this respect, the underlying Truman doctrine marks the end of the US war coalition with the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Cold War. The goals of the transatlantic bargain sought by the US were twofold. First, it was banking on the economic recovery of European nations to create resiliency against communist movements. Second, the European security architecture was supposed to balance the Soviet power ambitions. While the former succeeded and led to the Rome treaties, failing to create a European Defense Community made an American long-term commitment to European stability and balance of power inevitable. While the NATO treaty of 1949 manifested the bi-polar order, the failure to establish a distinct Western-European security identity led to the long-term US commitment to the security of Europe. As a consequence, European security has been strictly connected to US national interests ever since, and the transatlantic bargain after 1954 became highly dependent on US nuclear weapons and US force presence in Europe.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the United States became the leading hegemonic power in the Western hemisphere and the driving power of NATO. The term *Pax Americana* became the synonym for the stability that followed the American post WWII commitment in Europe through the end of the Cold War. But even the latest National Security

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<sup>4</sup> Stanley R. Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?: NATO and the Transatlantic Bargain from Truman to Obama* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 4.

Strategy does not suggest any substantial change to this fundamental understanding.<sup>5</sup>

Today, the US faces significant security challenges that result from global involvement, and these challenges will drive the US away from unilateral (military) power projection towards an integrated and institutionalized soft-power approach. This can be both an integrator of US and European security cooperation, as well as a stress test for global security cooperation and grand strategy. Madeleine Albright once asserted, “the United States and Europe will certainly face challenges beyond Europe’s shores. Our nations share global interests that require us to work together to the same degree of solidarity that we have long maintained on this continent.”<sup>6</sup> While this arguably continues to be true, the question remains if NATO is a viable—and reliable—segue to preserve the US global leadership position and how much the US is willing to pay for enabling NATO to become a global player—considering the evident capability deficits of European Alliance members and the weaknesses of the general organizational framework with regard to decision-making and resolve.

On the other hand, since 2001, the incentive for paying this price might have become even higher. What sounds paradoxical at first strictly follows prestige considerations and the US requirement to build a legitimate base for its own national interest. In 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in history, and in the aftermath of 9/11, the US experienced a global wave of sympathy and unconstrained support. Combined with the world’s most capable military, the moral case of defending the nation against perfidious terror attacks for a short time made the US the unchallengeable super-power with the moral force to pursue its national interests. Effectively, the US held all power required

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<sup>5</sup> Barack Obama, “The National Security Strategy 2015” (The White House, Washington, February 2015), 25, <http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, Press Conference at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium, December 8, 1998.

to maintain its global leadership position—this status was based on soft and hard power. Today, the global security situation is just as threatening as before, but the prestige of the US has significantly suffered from a decade of unilateralism. In addition, the Asian pivot was interpreted as the US turning away from its own political priorities and principles. The diminishing prestige left European NATO nations wondering if bandwagoning the global ambitions of the US in terms of security and stability would serve their very own interests enough to embark on a common global security strategy. The other relevant concern remains; does the US retain enough power to secure the status-quo in Europe, notwithstanding the challenges in the Asia-Pacific region.

In 2002—after 9/11 and before OIF—Joseph Nye concluded that the US was well placed to remain the leading power in world politics. He based his conclusion on a number of assumptions, which have proven to be relevant during the course of the events since. He assumed that (1) the long-term productivity of the American economy would sustain, (2) American society would not decay, (3) the US military would remain superior with politics not becoming over-militarized, (4) US soft-power funds would not be squandered by unilateral or arrogant behavior, (5) US politics would not become isolationistic, and (6) US national interests would remain globally, broad, and far-sighted.<sup>7</sup> Nye basically argued for a balanced hard- and soft-power approach that would secure America's global-leadership role in the twenty-first century and reconcile national and global interests.<sup>8</sup> Using Nye's assumptions, global developments and US national behavior under the Bush and Obama administrations did not serve this US global-leadership perspective. On the one hand, the global economic crisis and excessive military spending heavily impacted the US economy. On the other, not only during OIF and OEF, but also

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 170–171.

<sup>8</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, 171.

during the global war on terror, the US pursued a unilateral and over-militarized security policy. While the US military continues to be the most powerful in the world, military power if used in isolation is not the most effective means of contemporary national power. Military interventions offer quick and visible, but often only virtual or partial, solutions to complex security challenges (as recently shown in Libya and Iraq). Barry Posen notes that in the last decade “Washington has overused its expensive military to send messages that ought to be left to diplomats.”<sup>9</sup> In Posen’s opinion, only utilizing all available instruments of power, with focus on soft power, will preserve the US influence and natural leadership position.

Gilpin notes that a great nation shapes the prestige that is necessary to exert national power effectively. Prestige serves as the non-material currency in international relations: “[It] refers primarily to the perceptions of other states with respect to a state’s capacities and its ability and willingness to exercise its power.”<sup>10</sup> While Gilpin focuses on the military aspects of building prestige, a comprehensive definition of prestige that encompasses the other aspects of power promotes a contemporary understanding of an international order based on analysis of cost, benefit, and risk of states’ behavior. With that, prestige becomes a critical resource by itself.

An effective strategy converts resources into desired outcomes.<sup>11</sup> As with all other nations, the US struggles to find strategies that convert its national and political power resources into realized political outcomes. While US hard-power capabilities still are unmatched, the potential for soft-power application has not yet been fully exploited.<sup>12</sup> Joseph Nye notes that “[w]e need more Jefferson and less Jackson. Our Wilsonians are correct about the importance of the democratic transformation of

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<sup>9</sup> Barry R. Posen, “Pull Back.,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 116–28.

<sup>10</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Nye, *Soft Power*, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Nye, *Soft Power*, 147.

world politics over the long term, but they need to remember the role of institutions and allies.”<sup>13</sup>

Over the last decade, the US has lost much of the prestige and international goodwill that followed the terror attacks in 2001. This is based on both the recognition that predominantly military strategies have limited effects in unconventional conflicts and the insight that multilateral approaches improve the effectiveness and legitimacy of international security cooperation. The US-dominated military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have achieved mixed results, at best. In fact, the unilateral approach to meet US global security requirements has proven to be ill-fated, and excessive unilateralism in general is perilous means for long-run objectives.<sup>14</sup> This behavior has not only wasted US prestige, but also the prestige of US Allies—to include NATO and its partners. The natural reaction is a broader skepticism within the Alliance with regards to military interventions for security purposes and mistrust of expanding the scope of NATO beyond regional interest due to an inherent suspicion of exclusively US interests.

Further, the US faces emerging competitors that challenge its leadership role in one or more fields of national power. In the next decades, China and Russia will challenge the economic, the informational, and the military spheres of national power. The latter is particularly threatened due to both the adversaries’ improving capabilities and diminishing US military budgets. Due to the budget cuts, the US military is constrained to winding down its ambitions and capacity regarding conventional military functions. The Quadrennial Defense Report (QDR) 2010 dismisses the traditional definition of number and scale of conflict scenarios that define force requirements explicitly.

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<sup>13</sup> Nye, *Soft Power*, 147.

<sup>14</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, 158.



Largely for this reason, past defense reviews have called for the nation's armed forces to be able to fight and win two major regional conflicts in overlapping time frames. These have been characterized as conflicts against state adversaries, typically employing conventional military forces. [This QDR] likewise assumes the need for a robust force capable of protecting U.S. interests against a multiplicity of threats, including two capable nation-state aggressors. It breaks from the past, however, in its insistence that the U.S. Armed Forces must be capable of conducting a wide range of operations, from homeland defense and defense support to civil authorities, to deterrence and preparedness missions, to the conflicts we are in and the wars we may someday face. [...] It is no longer appropriate to speak of 'major regional conflicts' as the sole or even the primary template for sizing, shaping, and evaluating U.S. forces.<sup>15</sup>

In fact, the current security environment requires a force composition that can do both the conventional war of the past and hybrid warfare in all war domains—land, sea, air, space, and cyber. While this assessment matches the contemporary global security environment, the QDR contains the confession that the scale of US military commitment and spending was not sustainable. The most visible result is the pivot to East Asia, which made sense considering the prevailing peace in Europe and the increased tensions in the SCS region. Treaty obligations and economic interest forced the US to make concessions towards a weighted commitment. "Five of the United States' seven major defense treaties are with Asia-Pacific nations, and Washington has strong partnerships with many other nations in the region."<sup>16</sup> In order "to reassure allies and deter opponents, the United States must maintain a strong economic, diplomatic, and military presence throughout Asia. Such an unambiguous approach is the key to regional peace and stability."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Robert M. Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Department of Defense, February 1, 2010), 42.

<sup>16</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 37.

<sup>17</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 37.

However, the reorientation from Europe to Asia resulted in a perceived weakness of the US and leaves doubts about its commitment to European security. Russia's action in Ukraine and its aggression towards NATO are clear indications of the so-called peace paradox. US signals of peace were considered signs of weakness and thus an "opportunity for taking the offensive and making a move to gain advantage."<sup>18</sup> The perceived weakness of European military power and resolve added to this situation and eventually encouraged the Kremlin's offensive strategy.

Today, the US finds itself in a strategic dilemma. In Washington's eyes, Russia's geopolitical resurgence in Eastern Europe represents just one of many global security challenges.<sup>19</sup> In Michael Roskin's analysis, the US has to decide between Russia and China or between NATO/Europe and Asia. Engaging both adversaries and regions would overwhelm US capabilities and pushes a Russian-Chinese alliance. While the latter is the normal balancing of nations reacting to a unipolar international order, the US, in managing its resources, must find leverage to serve both theatres effectively and efficiently. The Heritage report *Index of U.S. Military Strength* points out that:

Russia's military incursion into Crimea and subsequent U.S. affirmation of support to European NATO nations triggered yet more concerns of a 'reverse Asia Pivot.' U.S. officials were dispatched to provide reassurance once again to both European and Asian allies. But the ease with which Putin annexed Crimea and the U.S. inability to prevent it from happening heightened anxiety that China could be emboldened to try a similar seizure in the Pacific.<sup>20</sup>

Any reaction that gives the impression of hasty crisis management and wavering priorities back and forth will increase the perception of

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<sup>18</sup> Nazli Choucri, *Cyberpolitics in International Relations* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012), 43.

<sup>19</sup> Michael G. Roskin, "The New Cold War.," *Parameters: U.S. Army War College* 44, no. 1 (2014): 5.

<sup>20</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 42.

weakness in the US adversaries' strategic calculus. That would threaten US interests in both theatres and have devastating impact on its prestige. In this respect, NATO could serve as both the leverage to retain the influence on Europe and preserve the international prestige. NATO might become the catalyst that will maximize US investment in national interests. On the other hand, European NATO nations must agree to a common security agenda and accept additional burden in order to retain the US security provision. Using this approach, expanding NATO's sphere of influence into Asia could become a win-win situation. However, there remains the risk of a new block-confrontation between NATO and the Chinese-Russian sphere of influence. A new Cold War might develop, if integrating the eastward expansion of NATO with other means of comprehensive institutional cooperation fails to rebut notions of a new US imperialism.

### **US – UK Special Relation**

Great Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role. The attempt to play a separate power role - that is, a role apart from Europe, a role based on a 'special relationship' with the United States, a role based on being the head of a 'commonwealth' which has no political structure, or unity, or strength, and enjoys a fragile and precarious economic relationship by means of the Sterling area and preferences in the British market - this role is about played out. Great Britain, attempting to work alone and to be a broker between the United States and Russia, has seemed to conduct policy as weak as its military power.<sup>21</sup>

Both Great Britain and the US share a history of being hegemonic powers with global ambitions. This ambition remains inherent in British foreign policy. Both once established a global order to meet their

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<sup>21</sup> Dean Acheson, "Our Atlantic Alliance.," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 29, no. 6 (1/1/63 1963): 601.

respective national interest. Gilpin points out the historical parallels between UK and US.

The Pax Britannica and Pax Americana, like the Pax Romana, ensured an international system of relative peace and security. Great Britain and the United States created and enforced the rules of a liberal international economic order. [...] They assumed these responsibilities because it was profitable to do so. The benefits to them of a secure status quo, free trade, foreign investment, and a well-functioning international monetary system were greater than the associated costs.<sup>22</sup>

The first NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay, stated in 1949 that the organization's goal was "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."<sup>23</sup> While keeping the Russians out and the Germans down were comprehensible, but primarily European problems, an American commitment to these problems allowed the UK to free up resources to sustain British global power ambitions and secure its leadership role within the Commonwealth.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the UK had a vital interest to keep the US involved in Europe. Following World War II, defense cooperation has continued to be at the heart of the special British—American relationship.

Nicholas Childs acknowledges the distinct relationship between the US and Great Britain as inevitable due to their "cultural, linguistic, economic, and emotional ties unmatched by any other partner of the United States."<sup>25</sup> However, he also mentions that the relationship between nations of vastly different weight at times can be troublesome and unrewarding. The UK accentuated this experience in 1947 with the US support for the UN Partition Plan for Palestine and in 1956 with the

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<sup>22</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 145.

<sup>23</sup> David Reynolds, *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 13.

<sup>24</sup> Sloan, *Permanent Alliance?*, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Jeffrey D McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21st Century* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2006), 125, <http://books.google.com/books?id=Gbx1AAAAMAAJ>.

US role during the Suez Crisis. As former British Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, once said of Great Britain: “We have no permanent allies, we have no permanent enemies, we only have permanent interests,”<sup>26</sup> and Henry Kissinger later confirmed this rather realistic view on international politics.<sup>27</sup> But unlike France, which sought more independence from the US after the Suez Crisis, Great Britain pursued an intensified partnership.<sup>28</sup>

The former UK ambassador to the US, Lord Renwick, once noted “Britain has influence on American policy to the extent that it still has some power and influence itself in various parts of the world ... the price of consultation is presence and participation.”<sup>29</sup> The British pursuit of strategic influence through the US is expressed not only in diplomatic advice and cooperation, but also and foremost through active contribution to the common security agenda. This became particularly apparent after 9/11. The UK contributed the largest contingent of non-US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. The British commitment to OIF exemplifies the deeply ingrained cooperation. This mutual cooperation has also been repeatedly acknowledged in US policy: “Our shared history and interests with the United Kingdom have created a steadfast bond, strengthened in recent years through operations together in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere.”<sup>30</sup>

The 2002 *Strategic Defence Review* underlined the firm commitment: “From the outset, we demonstrated by our actions our wish to work closely with our most important ally, the US. Our ability to operate alongside the US (and with other partners, particularly in Europe but

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<sup>26</sup> Lord Henry John Temple Palmerston, “Treaty of Adrianople” (Speech to the House of Commons, London, March 1, 1848), <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1848/mar/01/treaty-of-adrianople-charges-against>.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 95–97.

<sup>28</sup> Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 597.

<sup>29</sup> Lord Renwick, quoted in McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21st Century*, 3.

<sup>30</sup> Gates, *QDR 2010*, 57.

also elsewhere) will be key to future success.”<sup>31</sup> Then, a 2003 White Paper further spelled out the central importance of the British defense capability to the relationship, and the clear trade-off between defense contribution and expectations of influence:

The significant military contribution the UK is able to make to [US-led coalition operations] means that we secure an effective place in the political and military decision-making processes. To exploit this effectively, our Armed Forces will need to be interoperable with US command and control structures, match the US operational tempo and provide those capabilities that deliver the greatest impact when operating alongside the US.<sup>32</sup>

Unlike other great European powers, Great Britain has followed US foreign policy. There has rarely been such a close partnership between these two allies before.<sup>33</sup> Great Britain’s general agreement to the US security agenda is mutually recognized. “Just as in the special relationship that binds us to the United Kingdom, these cooperative relationships forge deeper ties between our nations.”<sup>34</sup> Great Britain acts in clear preference for bandwagoning with the US over an institutionalized approach via NATO and EU. The latest *Strategic Defence Review* confirmed this basic strategy. “Our relationship with the US will continue to be *essential* to delivering the security and prosperity we need [emphasis added].”<sup>35</sup>

To a lesser degree, the UK engages in institutional security through NATO and the EU. In recognition of the vast US efforts toward European security during the Cold War and the US commitment to the military

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<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Defence, *The Strategic Defence Review: A New Chapter*. (London: The Stationery Office, 2002), 5.

<sup>32</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Delivering Security in a Changing World* ([London]: The Stationery Office, 2003), 8.

<sup>33</sup> McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 135.

<sup>34</sup> Bush, “NSS2006,” 39.

<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy* ([Norwich]: The Stationery Office, 2010), 15, <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/national-security-strategy.pdf>.



operations in former Yugoslavia and Iraq, British Prime Minister Tony Blair stressed the necessity to eventually build a European security architecture once noted that “it’s time to repay America.”<sup>36</sup> This call expressed the urgent need for NATO’s new strategy (Strategic Concept 1999) and a more robust European security identity—the conception of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP; later CSDP: European Union Common Security and Defence Policy).

Here, the UK seeks a leading role to preserve the influence appropriate for a nuclear power and permanent member of the UN Security Council.

We must ensure that we continue to play a leading part in the development of NATO and EU [through CSDP] capabilities better configured to conduct expeditionary operations outside Europe. Our Armed Forces will continue to be prepared and equipped to lead and act as the framework nation for [CSDP] or similar ad hoc coalitions’ operations where the US is not participating.<sup>37</sup>

The British government claims an ambitious role in the global order (“We are a country whose political, economic and cultural authority far exceeds our size”<sup>38</sup>), but at the same time recognizes that with the shift in global power balance, it will become harder to stand up to this claim.<sup>39</sup> From a military perspective, it is helpful that the UK is one of few European countries with a genuine geopolitical grasp of military realities (partly due to its colonial history) and a political tolerance for respective

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<sup>36</sup> Tony Blair, “It’s Time To Repay America - NYTimes.com,” November 13, 1998, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/11/13/opinion/it-s-time-to-repay-america.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Delivering Security in a Changing World*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy*, 4.

<sup>39</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy*, 4.



costs.<sup>40</sup> It is one of few NATO nations capable of sustaining a global military presence in terms of both transport capacity and logistics.<sup>41</sup>

However, given the limited overall contribution that a minor international player like Great Britain can make to the global security efforts of the US—militarily and otherwise—it is highly unlikely that a singularly transatlantic-oriented foreign policy can serve the British long-term national interests. First, Great Britain is geographically and traditionally separated from the European continent and always skeptical towards the European integration efforts of the EU, despite the proximity—geographically, historically, and culturally—to Europe being as close (or as far) as with the US. Second, with its huge financial sector, the British economy will increasingly experience pressure not only from emerging financial competitors in Asia, but also direct competition with its main ally.<sup>42</sup> Playing a more integrated leadership role in the European financial sector, for example, would better match the British economic capacity and secure crucial global economic interest, as well as access to European and global markets. Third, in the wake of the global financial crisis, the UK has significantly cut back on military budgets.<sup>43</sup> Meanwhile, the UK embarked on a modernization program that might leave the UK military with niche capabilities, but severely overstretched.<sup>44</sup> This further increases the imbalance in capability between the US and the UK. Fourth, the US, like all great powers, will eventually follow its own interests. In case of a broadening mismatch of global security ambitions and power projection capabilities, the UK as independent actor must face the risk of losing more of its international prestige.

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<sup>40</sup> McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 114.

<sup>41</sup> McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 114.

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy*, 15.

<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy*, 5.

<sup>44</sup> McCausland et al., *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 114.

In this respect, the UK is likely to base its international interest on multiple pillars. While interested in a global security agenda, it cannot exclusively rely on the transatlantic cooperation. This is true for all spheres of national power. With the Ukraine crisis at hand, the next Strategic Defence Review (expected for 2015) might re-prioritize situations of an “attack by a state on another NATO or EU member to which the UK would have to respond.”<sup>45</sup> But it is not likely that the UK will lose its global perspective. While European security and the defense of NATO territory might regain focus, Great Britain’s global ambitions could be served best by expanding NATO’s scope. British national interest combined with the strong integration of transatlantic politics would share the burden of cost. In this respect, the ESDP does not offer the same degree of geopolitical freedom, takes longer, and requires closer ties to the despicable EU bureaucracy.

## Germany

Due to its geographical size and position, and robust economy, Germany stands out as *primus inter pares* within Europe. Germany’s economic and political interests are global, but German security interests are limited to Europe and its margins.

Since the end of the Cold War and the reunification, Germany has struggled to find its role as regional power and global player. Robert Kagan once characterized Germany’s behavior in foreign policy as “mingling self-confidence with self-doubt since the end of the Second World War.”<sup>46</sup> That self-doubt has gradually disappeared during the course of the European debt crisis and Germany’s new power-awareness provoked the perception of Germany as Europe’s dominant power. While “[t]he whole of the Eurozone looked to Germany—the largest creditor in a

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<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty the National Security Strategy*, 27.

<sup>46</sup> Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Knopf, 2003), 6.

crisis of a common currency consisting of sovereign states—for leadership,” the so-called “German question” reemerged.<sup>47</sup> Thomas Mann famously asked, if the future would see a ‘European Germany’ or a ‘German Europe’ and French president Nicolas Sarkozy once noted that the Germans “haven’t changed.”<sup>48</sup>

Germany has returned to its *Mittellage*, or central location, in Europe. In opposition to pre-1945 Germany, today contemporary Germany is deeply tied to Western democratic norms and values. Germany has abandoned any notion of militarism. In line with her post-WWII tradition, Germany is reluctant to use military power as means of foreign policy. Instead, Germany developed a huge export-driven economy. Germany is competing with the United States and China for the position as the world’s leading goods exporter.<sup>49</sup> Her GDP is the fourth largest in the world.<sup>50</sup> In that respect, Germany is what can be called the “purest example of a *geo-economic power*.”<sup>51</sup> Hans Kundnani describes the *The Paradox of German Power* as “a strange mixture of economic assertiveness and military abstinence.”<sup>52</sup> Deeply integrated into a multilateral and comprehensive concept of security, the latest White Paper (2006) reaffirmed the integration of Germany into the European and transatlantic security framework.

The transatlantic partnership remains the foundation of Germany’s and Europe’s common security. The North Atlantic Alliance will continue to be the cornerstone of Germany’s future security and defence policy. Forming the link between two continents, it provides unique political and military instruments

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<sup>47</sup> Hans Kundnani, *Paradox of German Power*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2.

<sup>48</sup> Kundnani, *Paradox of German Power*., 3.

<sup>49</sup> *IHS Jane’s - Germany > ECONOMY*, Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment - Western Europe, (March 16, 2015), <https://janes-ihsc.com.au/fric.idm.oclc.org/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1305761&Pubabbrev=WEUR>.

<sup>50</sup> “GDP (current US\$) | Data | Graph,” accessed January 30, 2015, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD/countries/EU?display=graph>.

<sup>51</sup> Kundnani, *Paradox of German Power*., 105.

<sup>52</sup> Kundnani, *Paradox of German Power*., 102.

for the maintenance and restoration of peace. In the long run, the global challenges confronting German security cannot be met without an effective transatlantic alliance that is based on mutual trust among its member states. The fundamental issues of European security can be addressed only in a joint effort with the United States of America, and this will continue to hold true in the future. However, the bonds between Germany and the United States must be continually cultivated and deepened through mutual consultation and coordinated action. Today, however, Germany is not only actively involved in military operations of NATO and EU, but seek a more active role in international politics.<sup>53</sup>

German security interests rest on European and transatlantic cooperation. In a well-noted speech at the 50<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference, Federal Minister of Defence Ursula von der Leyen underlined the German will to play a more active role in a more integrated European security architecture:

I have got the impression that we already lost time by looking too much at our national courtyards instead of focusing on the whole set of European forces. If we Europeans want to remain a credible actor in security policy, we must plan and act together. European nations ought to be prepared to take over a fair share of the transatlantic burden – in a combined, consensual and efficient manner. [...] As a major economy and a country of significant size we have a strong interest in international peace and stability. Given these facts the Federal Government is prepared to enhance our international responsibility.<sup>54</sup>

Germany is attached to a traditional interpretation of Article 5 and the understanding of NATO as an Alliance for collective defense with the

<sup>53</sup> Federal Ministry of Defence, “White Paper 2006 on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr,” October 25, 2006, 7, <http://www.bmvg.de/resource/resource/MzEzNTM4MmUzMzMyMmUzMTM1MzMyZTM2MzEzMMDwMzAzMDMwMzAzMDY3NmE2ODY1NmI3ODc4MzlyMDIwMjAyMDIw/W%202006%20eng%20DS.pdf>.

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Ursula von der Leyen, “Speech by the Federal Minister of Defense” (50th Munich Security Conference, Munich, January 31, 2014), [https://www.securityconference.de/fileadmin/MSC\\_/2014/Reden/2014-01-31-Speech-MinDef\\_von\\_der\\_Leyen-MuSeCo.pdf](https://www.securityconference.de/fileadmin/MSC_/2014/Reden/2014-01-31-Speech-MinDef_von_der_Leyen-MuSeCo.pdf).

added capability to eliminate threats where they emerge.<sup>55</sup> The main focus of German politics is CM to increase stability and security in Europe and at its margins.

The most successful strategy is capacity and institution building. Neither NATO nor the EU – let alone individual nations – can sustainably solve crises such as those in Africa. It is therefore crucial to enable reliable partners on the ground – be it regional organizations or states – to provide for their own security.<sup>56</sup>

While acknowledging global economic interest, Germany hesitates to link economic interests to security interests. At the 51<sup>st</sup> Munich Security Conference, Chancellor Angela Merkel recognized the fierce global economic competition, but resisted advocating for a more offensive stance regarding pursuit of national interest. Instead, Germany continues to pursue a strategy of economic cooperation and institutionalization of global trade.

Thus on the German side we will work resolutely to secure the conclusion of a free-trade agreement with the United States of America. For we don't want to sit back and watch whilst all of Asia concludes free-trade agreements one-by-one and Europe falls behind.<sup>57</sup>

The UN will remain the primary arbitrator of global issues and crisis. Germany is poised to take on more responsibility within the UN, which may result in the pursuit of permanent membership status in the Security Council.<sup>58</sup> Formalization of NATO partnerships with Japan or Australia would distract from NATO's core function—common defense.

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<sup>55</sup> Beata. Górka-Winter, Marek. Madej, and Mateusz. Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept: an overview* (Warszawa: Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2010), 49.

<sup>56</sup> von der Leyen, "Speech by the Federal Minister of Defense."

<sup>57</sup> Dr. Angela Merkel, "Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel on the Occasion of the 51st Munich Security Conference," February 7, 2015, [http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Reden/2015/2015-02-07-merkel-sicherheitskonferenz\\_en.html?nn=393812](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Reden/2015/2015-02-07-merkel-sicherheitskonferenz_en.html?nn=393812).

<sup>58</sup> Frank Walter Steinmeier, "Germany Prepared To Take On Responsibility in the United Nations," *German Missions in the United States - Germany at the UN*, September 29, 2014, [http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/\\_\\_pr/P\\_\\_Wash/2014/09/29-Steinmeier-UN.html](http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/__pr/P__Wash/2014/09/29-Steinmeier-UN.html).

Therefore, Germany is unlikely to actively seek further expansion and a progressive global role for NATO. The Alliance competence should lie within the sphere of traditional (military) activities. NATO can provide a political forum to assess the military dimension of security challenges, but NATO's responsibilities should not include non-military threats.<sup>59</sup> Unless the military threat regarding German economic freedom of action or the European security changed, it is unlikely that Germany will deviate from this policy.

## **France**

Since the beginning of the post-WWII era, France has been the greatest proponent for deepening European integration. In 1960, France's De Gaulle government brought forward the Fouchet Plans with the vision for a confederated European security and defense institution that were later rejected by other European governments.<sup>60</sup> Divergent perceptions about the roles and responsibilities in European security have persisted since the Defense White Paper of 1972. It noted that a common European defense policy could not develop due to fact that "the diversity of ideologies clearly ruled out European military union."<sup>61</sup> Even the latest White Paper (2013) explicitly highlights the elusive option of an integrated European defense: "France reaffirms its ambition for a credible and effective European defence strategy, but it cannot ignore the stumbling blocks to development of the European framework."<sup>62</sup> Therefore, France builds its security strategy on three pillars: independent national capabilities, a defense-postured NATO, and an

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<sup>59</sup> Górka-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 50.

<sup>60</sup> Hofmann, *European Security in NATO's Shadow*, 46.

<sup>61</sup> Hofmann, *European Security in NATO's Shadow*, 46.

<sup>62</sup> François Hollande, "French White Paper on Defence and National Security - 2013" (République Française, July 2013), 59, [http://www.rpfrance-otan.org/IMG/pdf/White\\_paper\\_on\\_defense\\_2013.pdf?572/67a412fbf01faadf4bbac1e9126d2e32f03f0bc0](http://www.rpfrance-otan.org/IMG/pdf/White_paper_on_defense_2013.pdf?572/67a412fbf01faadf4bbac1e9126d2e32f03f0bc0).



integrated European defense strategy.

In 2009 France returned to the military structure of NATO. Today, France's growing preeminence is reflected in its contribution to NATO's operations and operational budget.<sup>63</sup> France understands NATO's primary mission as the defense of the Euro-Atlantic area and believes out-of-area operations should not become the rule.<sup>64</sup> If NATO agreed on an out-of-area mission, a UN mandate would be necessary. Nevertheless, France provides the majority of its military with the dual-mission capability of national defense and crisis management. In that respect, the 2013 White Paper marks the latest instance of modernizing and transforming the French military into a dual-capable, defense and expeditionary force.<sup>65</sup>

Recognizing the "new strategic environment," the White Paper sets clear geostrategic priorities for the security of Europe and North Atlantic space with France playing an active role in the European Union and NATO.<sup>66</sup> It does not suggest expansion of NATO beyond the European region, and it stresses the priority of acting within the EU context.<sup>67</sup> France is a strong advocate for the revitalization of the CSDP in order to balance the risk of undue transatlantic dominance.<sup>68</sup>

France has strong historic links to the North African crisis areas. The French intervention in Mali demonstrates the resolve to intervene and engage in its sphere of interest. French cooperation with MD and ICI countries is particularly significant and France is one of the most active NATO nations in these forums.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Górka-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 43.

<sup>64</sup> Górka-Winter, et. al., *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 44.

<sup>65</sup> Górka-Winter, et. al., *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 45–46.

<sup>66</sup> Hollande, "French White Paper on Defence and National Security - 2013," 59.

<sup>67</sup> Hollande, "French White Paper", 61.

<sup>68</sup> Hollande, "French White Paper", 62; Górka-Winter, et. al., *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 46.

<sup>69</sup> Górka-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 46.



Further, the 2013 White Paper also recognizes France's strategic role in the Asia-Pacific region. Here, it stresses the need for a more active role of the EU in the ASEAN Regional Forum. Beyond that, France pursues influence in the region through a number of bi- and multi-lateral agreements.

Through defence cooperation, France contributes to the security of several countries in the region, notably Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. It bolsters its political engagement through an active presence, development of strategic partnerships and intensification of its cooperation networks. With Singapore, our leading commercial partner in South-East Asia and number three in Asia (after China and Japan), it conducts regular political dialogue and very close cooperation in defence and security.<sup>70</sup>

In 2012, France and Australia signed a strategic-partnership agreement that underlines converging interests in regional and international matters, as well as reconfirms France's interest to maintain a "presence on the part of countries in the region."<sup>71</sup>

In summary, France is expanding its sphere of interest and influence, but stands firm in responding to threats of European security, as is apparent in the Ukraine crisis.<sup>72</sup> Resource scarcity and an increasing number of crises will stretch France's efforts thin. Thus, the EU and NATO offer opportunities to promote French interests beyond European defense. In geographical terms, France shares many interest with other NATO members and especially the US. This should create sufficient opportunities for further cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

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<sup>70</sup> Hollande, "French White Paper on Defence and National Security - 2013," 57.

<sup>71</sup> Hollande, "French White Paper, 57; "Joint Statement of Strategic Partnership between Australia and France," *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, January 19, 2012, <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/france/Pages/joint-statement-of-strategic-partnership-between-australia-and-france.aspx>.

<sup>72</sup> "Ukraine Ceasefire Agreed at Belarus Talks | World News | The Guardian," accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/12/ukraine-crisis-reports-emerge-of-agreement-in-minsk-talks>.

## **Poland and the Baltics – New Members with a Loaded History**

The 2008 war in Georgia, but much more the recent Ukraine crisis stimulated NATO's attention for its core competency and mission. In 1999, when Poland became one of the first new Alliance members that emerged from the Soviet Bloc, Poland's main interest lay with immediate national security, territorial integrity, and protection from Russian influences on its near abroad sphere of interest. Today, Russian expansionist foreign politics resurrect this angst. For Poland, as with other member nations with a common border with Russia and/or a Russian minority population, a similar threat-perception applies. Now and then, the effect of this insecurity leaves former European communist states less interested in an understanding of NATO's post-Cold War transformation. In the words of a former deputy chief of the Polish mission to NATO:

Speaking honestly, we have rather mixed feelings [concerning the 1999 Strategic Concept], because we really would like to enjoy membership in "traditional" NATO. For half a century, we in Poland were denied stability and security that was enjoyed, for example, in the U.S. At least for a few years we would like to enjoy peace and security and simply feel confident under the nuclear umbrella. But it has turned out that immediately after accession to the alliance we had to begin discussing seriously the changes within and the transformation of the alliance. Many politicians [in Poland] do not like such a situation. The reason is understandable, for we would like to have a feeling of peace and security and we did not want to enter an organization in the midst of a metamorphosis.<sup>73</sup>

In 2000, RAND analyst Thomas S. Szayna agreed that "these states have limited experience with full national sovereignty in the modern era. This too leads to greater concern with security than is exhibited by NATO countries that have been secure for decades [...] In countries whose history of conflict with Russia pre-dates World War II, security concerns

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<sup>73</sup> Comments made by Witold Waszczykowski at a round-table discussion at the Euro-Atlantic Association, Warsaw, April 9, 1999, as transcribed in "NATO-Nowe Wyzwania"(NATO—New Challenges), Polska w Europie, No. 29, August 1999, p. 74.

are magnified.”<sup>74</sup> NATO’s reluctance to resolutely respond to Russian cyber attacks on Estonia in 2007 did not improve the confidence in NATO’s security provision.<sup>75</sup>

NATO membership carries the Article 5 defense commitment of all members in case of military attack. Doubts about resolve and capability are understandable and constrain those nations’ imminent security interests. The Ukraine crisis showed how effective asymmetric warfare is. The threat has moved from straightforward military confrontation towards a combination of regular and irregular warfare methods (“pinpoint strikes, deliberately limited in scale and reach—often hidden, only implicit in the authorship”).<sup>76</sup> Therefore, classical deterrence might not be as effective against Russian destabilization efforts. A perceived weakness of NATO’s capabilities or resolve will increase the likelihood of further Russian aggression.

The biggest threat to the Baltic States, for example, may not come from Russian tanks rolling into the country but from Russian money, propaganda, establishment of NGOs, and other advocacy groups—all of which undermine the state. Russia’s aggressive actions in Ukraine have proven how effective these asymmetrical methods can be at creating instability, especially when coupled with conventional power projection<sup>77</sup>

Today, the Baltic States and Poland represent both NATO’s bulwark in Northeastern Europe, but it is also the northeastern continental flank that demonstrates NATO’s geostrategic vulnerabilities.<sup>78</sup>

In its 2013 White Book, Poland stresses its integration into NATO, the EU, and the strategic partnership with the US.<sup>79</sup> It recognizes four

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<sup>74</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, *NATO Enlargement, 2000-2015: Determinants and Implications for Defense Planning and Shaping* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 24.

<sup>75</sup> P. W. Singer and Allan Friedman, *Cybersecurity and Cyberwar: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 122–123.

<sup>76</sup> Bronislaw Komorowski, “White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland” (The National Security Bureau, Warsaw, 2013), 13.

<sup>77</sup> Wood, *Heritage - 2015 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, 106–107.

<sup>78</sup> Simón, “Assessing NATO’s Eastern European ‘Flank,’” 72.

<sup>79</sup> Komorowski, “White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland,” 10.

factors that determine Europe's security: "NATO, the European Union, the strategic presence of the USA, and relations with Russia," and unsurprisingly, Poland exposes a rather conservative posture with regard to further NATO expansion:

It appears necessary above all to consolidate around the defence function, thereby contributing to the strengthening of the sense of security of all member countries of the Alliance and, consequently, increasing their willingness and readiness to engage in out-of-area operations which will be also necessary in the future.<sup>80</sup>

Recognizing the scale of issues with the EU's CSDP, Poland stresses the necessity of strategic US presence, which is a strong statement for NATO as the long-term primary security provider in Europe.<sup>81</sup> Poland's interests are strictly limited to the region, with limited readiness to "selectively participat[e] in international operations" under UN mandate, if those present new sources of threat.<sup>82</sup>

Overall, lacking any national interest for a more global view on national security, the 2013 White Book allows little leeway for discussing an expansion of NATO's scope beyond European security. However, it recognizes the crucial role of future US military and political commitments. Unsurprisingly, very similar considerations motivate the national security and defense strategies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, resulting in the same reluctance to expand NATO's sphere of influence.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Komorowski, "White Book on National Security", 12.

<sup>81</sup> Komorowski, "White Book on National Security", 13.

<sup>82</sup> Komorowski, "White Book on National Security", 15.

<sup>83</sup> Estonian Ministry of Defence, "National Defence Strategy Estonia," February 2011, [www.mod.gov.ee](http://www.mod.gov.ee); Ministry of Defence, "The State Defence Concept - Latvia," May 10, 2012, [www.mod.gov.lv](http://www.mod.gov.lv); Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, "National Security Strategy - Lithuania," June 26, 2012, [http://www.kam.lt/en/defence\\_policy\\_1053/important\\_documents/strategical\\_documents.html](http://www.kam.lt/en/defence_policy_1053/important_documents/strategical_documents.html); Gorka-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 41-42.

## **Turkey – The "Bridge Head" to the Middle East**

Following the Truman Doctrine, the US decided to expand the financial support of the Marshall Plan to Turkey. This fostered a trustful relationship between the US and Turkey, which eventually led to Turkey's integration into the Western Alliance. In 1952, Turkey acceded to the Treaty and has been a geostrategic key element of NATO's defense ever since.<sup>84</sup> Due to national politics, ideology, and culture, this was not an easy process. Today, Turkey is one of the most crucial members for the future of the Alliance.

Since Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's presidency, Turkey has tried to align with the West and prove its geostrategic value. After receiving financial assistance, Turkey officially recognized Israel within nine months of its establishment and allowed Turkish Jews to emigrate. That caused tension and resentment with most of the Arab nations that lasted for decades.<sup>85</sup> The Cyprus crisis of 1974 with the accompanying US arms embargo, and the later refusal to allow OIF operations from Turkish soil caused a deep crisis in the bilateral relations. During recent years, however, the relationship has begun to normalize. The *2015 US National Security Strategy* recognizes the need to "continue to transform our relationship with Turkey"<sup>86</sup>

Turkey's role in NATO has been troublesome at times. The hesitation of European Allies in 1991 and 2003 to respond to a potential military threat spilling over from Iraq, and the European reluctance to classify the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) a terrorist organization created concerns about NATO's resolve to fulfill its defense commitments.<sup>87</sup> But generally,

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<sup>84</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook.*, 15.

<sup>85</sup> Norbert Theodor Wiggershaus, Winfried Heinemann, and Germany., eds., *Nationale Aussen- Und Bündnispolitik Der NATO-Mitgliedstaaten, Entstehung Und Probleme Des Atlantischen Bündnisses Bis 1956*, Bd. 2 (München: Oldenbourg, 2000), 282.

<sup>86</sup> Obama, "NSS2015," 25.

<sup>87</sup> Górká-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 108; North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook.*, 220. In 2003, only

Turkey has been a strong proponent of NATO as the foundation of transatlantic ties and the Euro-Atlantic security system.<sup>88</sup> Turkey not only possesses the Alliance's second largest army and contributed to NATO's operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, but also actively engages in anti-terrorism efforts by hosting NATO's Center of Excellence for Defence against Terrorism (COI-DAT).<sup>89</sup> Further, Turkey is deeply engaged in all NATO partnership programs and prioritized them in its foreign politics.

With the understanding that European security cannot be dissociated from Mediterranean security, Turkey shares the belief that the Mediterranean Dialogue should be strengthened in areas where NATO can bring an added value. Turkey also supports further enhancing the relations with Gulf countries through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.<sup>90</sup>

The Turkish Government is committed to becoming a full member of the European Union. Until now, this process has lasted for over half a century and the "enlargement fatigue" of the EU slowed down Turkey's accession negotiations.<sup>91</sup> Additionally, the intricacy of Turkey's turbulent relationships with Greece and the Republic of Cyprus have been an issue. *Turkey's New European Union Strategy* underlines the strategic importance of Turkey-EU relations, but demands a strategic vision that suits its global power.<sup>92</sup> Regarding the EU, Turkey's booming economy has led to a new level of confidence. This creates impatience with the

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after intense discussion, defensive measures were implemented to assist Turkey under Operation Display Deterrence.

<sup>88</sup> Górka-Winter, Madej, and Gniazdowski, *NATO member states and the new strategic concept*, 107.

<sup>89</sup> "Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism," accessed April 16, 2015, <http://www.coedat.nato.int/about.html>.

<sup>90</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Turkey's Relations with NATO," accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/nato.en.mfa>.

<sup>91</sup> Republic of Turkey - Ministry for EU Affairs, "Turkey's New European Union Strategy," September 2014, 1, [http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/pub/turkeys\\_new\\_eu\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/pub/turkeys_new_eu_strategy.pdf).

<sup>92</sup> Republic of Turkey - Ministry for EU Affairs, "Turkey's New European Union Strategy", 2.



accession process, underlining the fact that a Turkish EU membership would return more strategic value than ever before.<sup>93</sup>

Regardless of a full EU membership, the conditions of participation of the non-EU allies in the ESDP (now CSDP) were defined in the Ankara Document, endorsed by the EU in 2002 at the Brussels Summit.<sup>94</sup> Thus, Turkey could theoretically play a strategic-partnership role in an EU-led European defense strategy. Turkey's strategic preference, however, favors transatlantic security cooperation with a strong US partnership.

Lately, the Turkish behavior during the Ukraine crisis, the Syrian civil war, and the ISIS crisis raised a number of questions about the strategic reliability of Turkey's commitment to its Western orientation. In addition, there is some concern about President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's intentions to reverse Turkish secularization, known as *Kemalism*, and push the Islamization of Turkey.<sup>95</sup> The main concern with Turkish regional politics is threefold. First, the hesitation to agree to the Western strategy in Syria and Northern Iraq, though logical, is troublesome. After decades of war against the radical Kurdish group PKK, NATO members providing training and armament to the Kurdish *Peshmerga* offended Turkish vital interests. Further, the Alliance's initial reluctance to provide theatre missile defense (TMD) against the threat from Syria during its civil war added to the skepticism of the strategic resolve to protect Turkey. Second, despite NATO and EU politics, Turkey's foreign policy seeks contiguity with Russia. In reaction to EU sanctions against Russia,

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<sup>93</sup> Republic of Turkey - Ministry for EU Affairs, "Turkey's New European Union Strategy", 3-4, 15.

<sup>94</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The European Union Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and NATO-EU Strategic Cooperation," accessed April 15, 2015, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iii\\_-turkey\\_s-views-on-current-nato-issues.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iii_-turkey_s-views-on-current-nato-issues.en.mfa).

<sup>95</sup> Kristin Fabbe, "Turkey's Secularization in Reverse?," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/02/09/turkeys-secularization-in-reverse/>; Ceylan Yeginsu, "Turkey Promotes Religious Schools, Often Defying Parents," *NYTimes.com*, December 16, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/17/world/europe/turkeys-religious-schools-rise-as-erdogan-exerts-sway.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/17/world/europe/turkeys-religious-schools-rise-as-erdogan-exerts-sway.html?_r=1).



Vladimir Putin announced the re-routing of the *South Stream* pipeline to Turkey and renamed the project to *Turkish Stream*.<sup>96</sup> Ankara did not hesitate to exploit the economic opportunities arising from the EU-imposed sanctions. In turn, deeper economic relations with Turkey gives Russia additional leverage to both continue supporting its long-term ally Bashar al-Assad and impose the *Montreaux Convention* that secures Russia's access to its only year-round warm water port. The convention assures Russia's freedom-of-action in the Black Sea. Non-Black Sea nations must give Turkey a 15-day notice before sending any warships through the straits onto the Black Sea, and the access of non-Black Sea nations must be limited to 21 straight days per warship, and a maximum aggregate tonnage of 45,000, with no vessel heavier than 15,000 tons."<sup>97</sup> This restriction, per se, prevents the deployment of NATO aircraft carriers into the Black Sea. Should tensions between NATO and Russia increase at the Alliance's Southeastern flank, Turkey must first make a strategic decision. "If a mutual decision is made, acting in collaboration with NATO will become a vital issue for Turkey."<sup>98</sup> There is a threat that Russia continues to nurture Turkish-Russian dependencies to weaken NATO's southeastern flank and its influence into the Middle East. The 2003 denial of operations out of Turkey demonstrated its geostrategic relevance. Turkish polities are aware of their strong position and promote their interests with great self-confidence. Third, standardization and coordinated armament is one of the key strengths and capabilities of NATO, enabling technical and procedural interoperability. Another example of Ankara's more independent stance on NATO policy and US

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<sup>96</sup> Reed and Arsu, "Russia Presses Ahead With Plan for Gas Pipeline to Turkey."

<sup>97</sup> Stephen Starr, "How The 1936 Montreux Convention Would Help Russia In A Ukraine War," *International Business Times*, May 12, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/how-1936-montreux-convention-would-help-russia-ukraine-war-1582507>.

<sup>98</sup> Fatih Özbay, "Discussions about Violation of the Montreux Convention and the Future of Turkish-Russian Relations," *Hazar Strateji Enstitüsü*, April 17, 2014, [http://www.hazar.org/blogdetail/blog/discussions\\_about\\_violation\\_of\\_the\\_montreux\\_convention\\_and\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_turkish\\_russian\\_relations\\_793.aspx?currentCulture=en-US](http://www.hazar.org/blogdetail/blog/discussions_about_violation_of_the_montreux_convention_and_the_future_of_turkish_russian_relations_793.aspx?currentCulture=en-US).

dependency is the procurement program for Turkey's next-generation air-and-missile defense system. Rather than procuring a NATO/European product (or at least a system that provided technical interoperability), Turkey decided to strike a deal with China to buy weapon systems of Russian origin.<sup>99</sup> Rather than following the tradition of integrating air-defense capabilities into NATO's Air Defence Ground Environment (NADGE), Turkey decided to operate the new system outside NATO's Integrated Air Defence System (NATINADS); a system that for decades formed the backbone of NATO's defense, and stretches from northern Norway to southeastern Turkey.<sup>100</sup> By doing this, Turkey undermines the Alliance's efforts for standardization and burden-sharing as laid out in the *Smart Defence* concept.

Overall, NATO depends on the geostrategic value of Turkey for both the ability to exert influence in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and beyond, as well as for the overall stability of the Alliance. In general, the same applies to the EU. But recent decisions of Turkish politics lead to the conclusion that there is a prevailing opinion within the Turkish government that abandoning the Western prerogative does not contain the same existential risk as in the past. Thus, Turkey will continue to seek strategic partnerships within NATO and EU, but will not be restricted to these.

## **The Aspirants**

### **Sweden and Finland**

Driven by the Ukraine crisis and Russia's aggressive behavior at their borders, both Sweden and Finland are currently considering full NATO membership. Unlike in the past, as they face an emerging threat

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<sup>99</sup> Bekdil, "Turkey Won't Link Air Defense System to NATO."

<sup>100</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*., 275.

from their common neighbor, political and public opinions move gradually to support a membership application.

Sweden and Finland have been PfP-nations since the program started in 1994 and part of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) political framework since 1997.<sup>101</sup> Both made significant contributions to the NATO operations IFOR/SFOR, ISAF, and OUP.<sup>102</sup> In 2013, Sweden and Finland joined the NATO Response Force (NRF).<sup>103</sup> The current focus of cooperation includes security and peacekeeping, crisis-management and civil-emergency planning, developing interoperability, and common training and exercises. In theory, both nations fulfill all requirements for an immediate NATO membership.

By its very nature, the current partnership efforts do not include mutual defense provisions, but both nations are members of NORDEFECO. The Nordic Defense Cooperation is a multinational agreement (based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)) between Sweden, Finland, and NATO-members Iceland, Norway and Denmark that does not pose a new alliance per se, but promotes defense cooperation at political and military levels.<sup>104</sup> In response to Russian actions, following their meeting on March 10, NORDEFECO defense ministers issued a joint declaration that reorients the joint security assessment.

The Russian aggression against the Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea are violations of international law and other international agreements. Russia's conduct represents the gravest challenge to European security. As a consequence, the security situation in the Nordic countries' adjacent areas has become significantly worsened during the past year.... we must be prepared to face possible crises or incidents. [...] Russia's propaganda and political manoeuvring are

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<sup>101</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Handbook*, 196.

<sup>102</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Handbook*, 146, 155.

<sup>103</sup> "NATO - Topic: NATO's Relations with Sweden," accessed April 16, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_52535.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52535.htm).

<sup>104</sup> "The Basics about NORDEFECO - Nordefco," accessed April 17, 2015, <http://www.nordefco.org/The-basics-about-NORDEFECO>.

contributing to sowing discord between the nations, as well as inside organisations like NATO and the EU. [...] The Nordic countries meet this situation with solidarity and a deepened cooperation.<sup>105</sup>

The language of the declaration is clear. While intensified defense cooperation does not make up for a full NATO membership, it creates a level of determination and credible deterrence without the need to wield the Article 5 instrument. In absence of the mutual-defense commitment, this provides a level of escalation towards Russia that is inherently defensive, stresses national security interests of NATO-affiliated states, and does not pose an undue expansion of NATO's territory. In that respect, Russia cannot claim harm to vital national interest. In fact, the Nordic nations demonstrate a *modus vivendi* when driving NATO expansion towards the Asia-Pacific region with two main characteristics. First, it can further NATO's sphere of influence by a combination of soft-power and hard-power capabilities. In order to unfold its full effect and prevent uncontrolled escalation, the expansion must be embedded in a comprehensive political and diplomatic strategy—without the binding mutual defense provisions. Eventually, this would lead to an institutionalized “Alliance of the Willing.”

## **Australia**

Australia follows a security strategy that emphasis a regional focus on economic opportunity and cooperation, with a strong focus on innovation and information sharing.<sup>106</sup> It recognizes the US commitment to the Asia-Pacific region as critical to national interest and regional stability. “Australia’s alliance with the United States is at the core of our

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<sup>105</sup> Sveinung Berg Bentzrød, “Russian Aggression: Nordic States Extend Their Military Cooperation,” *Aftenposten.no*, April 9, 2015, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/uriks/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation-7975109.html>.

<sup>106</sup> Australia and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Strong and Secure: A Strategy for Australia’s National Security* (Canberra: The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2013), 44.

approach to national security and makes a major contribution to regional security and stability.”<sup>107</sup> Further, Australia is regionally integrated through a dense network of economic and political bi- and multi-lateral agreements. Australia recognizes the increasing number of regional actors causing an increasing struggle for influence and risk for its own interests. Australia seeks to expand its influence through bolstering its regional relationships. Here, improving its relationship with China is the highest priority. While New Zealand remains the most important security partner, Australia seeks bilateral rather than multilateral security cooperation with the individual ASEAN nations, as well as Japan, South Korea, and India.<sup>108</sup> With ASEAN, Australia cooperates to combat international terrorism.<sup>109</sup> A more comprehensive security cooperation between Australia and ASEAN has been a work in progress since the fourth ASEAN-Australia Joint Cooperation Committee meeting in 2014.<sup>110</sup>

Generally, Australia seeks security cooperation with NATO members other than the US (UK, Canada, France, Portugal, Spain, and The Netherlands),<sup>111</sup> but cooperation with NATO gained momentum after 9/11, when Australia invoked the ANZUS treaty in order to demonstrate solidarity with the US in the effort to respond to the terror attacks.<sup>112</sup> Since then, Australia has made significant force contributions to the US-led OIF campaign and NATO’s ISAF. Formal political cooperation between Australia and NATO started with the 2008 Bucharest Summit. The

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<sup>107</sup> Australia, *Strong and Secure*, 38.

<sup>108</sup> Australia, *Strong and Secure*, 38.

<sup>109</sup> “ASEAN-Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism,” asean.org, (2004), <http://www.asean.org/communities/asean-political-security-community/item/asean-australia-joint-declaration-for-cooperation-to-combat-international-terrorism-2>.

<sup>110</sup> ASEAN Secretariat News, “ASEAN and Australia to Strengthen Comprehensive Partnership,” *Asean.org*, September 29, 2014, <http://www.asean.org/news/asean-secretariat-news/item/asean-and-australia-to-strengthen-comprehensive-partnership>.

<sup>111</sup> “Australia Joining NATO Must Be Carefully Considered.”

<sup>112</sup> John Howard, “Press Conference AUS Prime Minister: U.S. Attacks: Government Invokes ANZUS Treaty,” *AustralianPolitics.com*, September 14, 2001, <http://australianpolitics.com/2001/09/14/government-invokes-anzus-treaty.html>.

summit declaration mentioned Australia's valuable contribution to the ISAF operations and proposed a "Tailored Cooperation Package."<sup>113</sup> Since 2012, Australia has appointed an ambassador to NATO in order to deepen engagement with the Alliance.<sup>114</sup> In 2014, Australia announced its support to ban Russia from the G20 using the prominent stage of the NATO summit in Wales, which demonstrated the close relationship with regard to global security interests.<sup>115</sup>

In summary, Australia's primary goal is not to pursue NATO membership. The security cooperation with NATO will remain similar in style and scale. If China demonstrates increasingly aggressive behavior towards its neighbors that significantly impacts "Australia's security and economic interests over coming decades," NATO can become an important regional partner, due to well-established mutual standards and interoperability.<sup>116</sup> Lacking a regional military organization, there is no regional alternative of the size and prestige of the US (or NATO) that could assist Australia in enforcing its security interests.

## **Prospects for International Cooperation**

### **Regional Organizations**

As part of the process of institutionalization, regional intergovernmental organizations (IGO) play a major role in the web of international relations and global security. The ability to interact and cooperate with these has the potential to further stabilize the security situation and create peaceful interaction. At the same time, only positive

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<sup>113</sup> "NATO Summit Bucharest 2008," para. 35.

<sup>114</sup> "Appointment of Australian Ambassador to NATO, Media Release, 20 Jan 2012, Australian Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Hon Kevin Rudd MP," accessed March 5, 2015, [http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2012/kr\\_mr\\_120120.aspx?ministerid=2](http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2012/kr_mr_120120.aspx?ministerid=2).

<sup>115</sup> "Julie Bishop to Discuss Putin G20 Ban at NATO Summit in Wales - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)," accessed March 5, 2015, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-09-02/australian-government-to-lobby-g20-nations-to-ban-putin/5712752>.

<sup>116</sup> Australia, *Strong and Secure*, 38.



interaction can create the momentum to influence the regional agendas. NATO's success in this domain will determine the leverage it will gain in the political domain. Military cooperation can open the door to otherwise unavailable political areas and regions. In this respect, the NATO agenda is clear. It certainly covers the security cooperation of Europe as its core competency. Further, due to its member nations' economic interest—and not at least due to the US Asia-Pacific pivot—the scope must reach beyond Europe. For Europe and Asia, a number of security-cooperation frameworks exist that can serve as single points of contact to expand the reach and integration of NATO's security policy. In Europe, and apart from the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) features the world largest security organization with its focus on the whole of Europe and beyond. The OSCE also maintains partnerships with nations in the Asia-Pacific region (Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Australia) where ASEAN is the greatest regional IGO.

But today's security agenda includes the instability of the Middle East and Africa. Lacking a coherent regional body of inter-governmental organizations to interact consistently, NATO developed three partnership programs that serve as the door-opener in the field of security politics: Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD). Using these programs as a mechanism not only for access, but also for creating an understanding of responsibility, and the development of self-esteem as a relevant player in their region has proven valuable in recent NATO operations in Afghanistan (International Security Assistance Force, ISAF) and Libya (Operation Unified Protector, OUP).

## **The European Union**



Contemporary transatlantic relations are mainly the relations between the US and the EU member nations.<sup>117</sup> In that respect, the Marshall Plan can be considered not only the bedrock for the post-WWII European integration, but also for the EU as the organization it is today. Under the conception that NATO won the Cold War, the current shape and form of the EU is the political manifestation of that success.

The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 form the framework to define the relationship between the 28 member states. The latter treaty carries many items of the proposed EU constitution that failed in 2005, but it lacks the very characteristics of a super-national constitution, making the EU a federal democracy like the US. In fact, EU member nations have not relinquished the bulk of their functions as sovereign states. This complicates formulating common goals and objectives, and most decisions must be taken in consensus, frequently negotiated at highest political levels, involving cross-domain bargaining. Together with the national election cycles and changing national agendas, decision-making, as well as developing a coherent and consistent strategy, is a highly complicated endeavor.<sup>118</sup> Thus, looking at the EU as a homogenous entity or sovereign power organization is misleading in all respects to the member nations' national power. The progress of European integration, as far as it has gotten, is fragile and by no means irreversible. In that respect, the majority of the European political capacity is spent on internal wrestling about common policies and crises management. National ideological preferences, however, structure preference in security policy while transnational congruencies

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<sup>117</sup> The little rather distinct difference between European NATO members and EU member states (namely Sweden and Turkey) will be discussed separately.

<sup>118</sup> The latest occurrence of these 'inconsistencies' is the election of the Greek government and the potential of changing the EU positions towards Russia regarding the Ukraine crisis for domestic politics. "News Analysis: How Syriza's Win Could Change EU Policy On Russia," accessed January 30, 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/how-syriza-win-changes-eu-russia-policy/26814067.html>.

help funnel the creation of security institutions.<sup>119</sup> Common fears or interests in terms of security and economy build a common basis to support the process.

Overall, the EU is the world's largest economic bloc. Its combined GDP surpasses the US GDP by one trillion and doubles the Chinese.<sup>120</sup> Even if China should continue to grow at current speed, it still will take decades to match the combined transatlantic economic power. The combined GDP of the US and the EU represents 40 percent of the global economy, and it would have the potential to eventually balance the growth of China.<sup>121</sup> But first and most obviously, the EU continues to struggle with the financial crisis. The European Central Bank (ECB) has just embarked on a vast debt-relief and stimulus program that pumps more than one trillion Euros into financial markets.<sup>122</sup> While its utility remains a controversy, the success of this program is uncertain. But as German chancellor Angela Merkel repeatedly said, "if the Euro fails, Europe fails."<sup>123</sup> And if the idea of a unified political entity breaks apart, this will cause not only a political, but also an economic disaster. Fragmentation of political and economic power will weaken global and regional influence and make the EU vulnerable to further Russian intrusions in its perceived near-abroad sphere of influence. Subsequently, but only if it survives the shockwaves of Europe's

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<sup>119</sup> Hofmann, *European Security in NATO's Shadow*, 204.

<sup>120</sup> "World Development Indicators | Data | The World Bank DataBank - Create Widgets or Advanced Reports and Share," accessed January 30, 2015, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/chart.aspx>.

<sup>121</sup> James Stavridis and Justin Muzinich, "Sisyphus Just Needs a Hand | Foreign Policy," accessed January 30, 2015, [http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/27/sisyphus-just-needs-a-hand-greece-europe-nato/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=Flashpoints&utm\\_campaign=2014\\_FlashPoints%20RS1%2F30](http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/27/sisyphus-just-needs-a-hand-greece-europe-nato/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=Flashpoints&utm_campaign=2014_FlashPoints%20RS1%2F30).

<sup>122</sup> John Hilsenrath, "Euro's Big Drop Puts U.S. Economy, Federal Reserve to the Test - WSJ," accessed January 30, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/euros-big-drop-puts-u-s-economy-federal-reserve-to-the-test-1422059437>.

<sup>123</sup> "If the Euro Fails, Europe Fails': Merkel Says EU Must Be Bound Closer Together - SPIEGEL ONLINE," accessed January 30, 2015, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/if-the-euro-fails-europe-fails-merkel-says-eu-must-be-bound-closer-together-a-784953.html>.

economic and political disintegration, NATO would become the only means to maintain the political and military stability in Europe. At this point, US vital interests are affected.

For that reason, current EU politics are significant with regard to US national interest, and the dissenting notions regarding a coherent and strong policy on the EU periphery must become a US concern. This by no means is limited to the military domain. Greek approaches to mitigate its financial crisis through Russian investments or the Hungarian aspiration of a more repressive form of governance while leaving behind liberal-democratic values must trigger security concerns. Both represent a subtle, civil use of Russian power and influence in the heart of Europe. As most EU nations are NATO members, the Alliance's military security interests are directly affected. With increased Russian influence on NATO members, the clear danger of undue interference into NATO policies and planning results. Trustful transatlantic information and intelligence sharing becomes more problematic and overall cooperation will suffer. Thus, by influencing EU nations, Russia might achieve the strategic goal of splitting the Alliance. This is a clear indication of the hybrid strategy that Russia uses to reduce US influence in Europe and reestablish its own sphere of influence. There is a simple answer to why Russian leaders assume an aggressive posture at NATO's margins: They can do so.

Generally, moving the focus away from Europe towards Asia left the impression of diminishing US support for Europe with a reduced resolve to engage. Further, perceived weaknesses of the EU and/or the European arm of NATO provoked adversaries like Russia to take advantage of the situation.<sup>124</sup> When the Ukrainian people and government reached out to seek membership in the EU, Russia's intervention proved its derogatory conviction towards Europe's

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<sup>124</sup> Walter R. Mead, "In It To Win It - The American Interest," accessed January 30, 2015, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2015/01/27/in-it-to-win-it/>.

capabilities. While Ukraine is not exactly critical for European stability, this case demonstrates the freedom of action that Russia has gained, and leaves Europe, without its transatlantic partner, perceived as weak, both politically and militarily.

But it also shows that institutionalism mainly works for nations that are bound to the institutions and abide by their own rule sets. Outlaw behavior demonstrates the weakness that institutionalism exposes to potential adversaries. Not fully integrating Russia into the existing institutions now appears a strategic mistake.

### **Regional Partnerships Programs (PfP, MD, ICI)**

Unconstrained by the corset of East-West-confrontation about spheres of interest, and in the light of blooming globalization, the terms security and interests gained a new dimension. New areas of interest—geographically and politically—became available to influence, with all the related opportunities and challenges. New partnership opportunities developed that were inconceivable before. For NATO with its foremost regional focus, partnership programs were set up in order to establish bilateral partnership and cooperation.

In 1994 the Partnership for Peace program (PfP) marked the first partnership initiative that in a number of cases ended in a full NATO membership.<sup>125</sup> In an attempt to capitalize on a common set of norms, values, and interests, the institutionalized goal of PfP is very clear. It “seeks to promote reform, increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened security relationships between individual Partner countries and NATO, as well as among Partner countries.”<sup>126</sup> Around the same time, the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) was initiated in recognition that European security is closely linked to security and stability in the

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<sup>125</sup> “NATO - Topic: Signatures of Partnership for Peace Framework Document (country, Name & Date),” accessed February 26, 2015, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_82584.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_82584.htm).

<sup>126</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*., 197.

Mediterranean region. The goal is to promote mutual understanding between NATO and the seven MD nations (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia), and “to encourage effective interaction on security issues of common concern, including terrorism, therefore moving the relationship from dialogue to partnership.”<sup>127</sup> Since 2004, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) complements the outreach effort. ICI is intended “to reach out to the broader region of the Middle East by promoting practical cooperation with interested countries, starting with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.”<sup>128</sup>

While some of the partnerships borne in these programs are troublesome, many have proven instrumental.



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<sup>127</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*, 28.

<sup>128</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization., *NATO Handbook*, 28.

## Chapter 3

### Options for a Future NATO Level of Ambition – Geopolitical Outlook

NATO's future level of ambition will be determined by the perception of common threats, common interests, and the mutual commitment within the Alliance. In order to develop valid future NATO models, a number of realistic assumptions must be made. First, Russia continues to pursue a regional leadership position within her sphere of interest and will exploit anticipated weaknesses in both NATO and EU to further her power position in Europe and globally. Second, the EU and the European NATO nations stay united and resist Russian incentives for division (e.g. Hungary, Greece). In that case, the entire institutionalized security in Europe is at stake. Third, within the process of continual European integration, major European member nations will be able to utilize their political and economic weight to stimulate consensus. Fourth, China's economic growth and hunger for resources will inevitably cause an expansion of its sphere of interest into the SCS and beyond. Bilateral agreements between China and other states will secure China's influence and impede building balancing alliances in Southeast Asia. The PLA will continue to generate an effective A2AD capability against military power-projection capability within the Chinese sphere of interest. China will use the Russian example of hybrid warfare used in Ukraine to prevent any interference of Western powers with national interests. Fifth, due to their cultural links to the West, Australia and other nations such as New Zealand will continue to seek a forum for security cooperation that balances the hegemonic ambitions of China. Sixth, ASEAN, the *de facto* EU equivalent in Asia, does not develop an effective military strategy that could balance China. Seventh, none of the ASEAN or neighboring states will develop a nuclear capability. This would change the whole calculus of Alliance options and cooperation in Asia. Eighth, the US retains the dominant influence to manipulate the common strategic

vision and the political flexibility to engage in fundamental questions about the structure and capability of NATO.

This chapter includes descriptions of three realistic scenarios that mark the extremes of NATO's possible future. Each of these three scenarios might not be able to stand alone, and more realistically, NATO's future will be a combination of the scenarios. But the scenarios demonstrate the major streams of thought or interest within the Alliance and point out both the inherent issues and necessary compromises.

### **#1: NATO is Obsolete.**

The first scenario follows the original realist assumptions that existed at the end of the Cold War. NATO has fulfilled its purpose after the Soviet Union disintegrated, and now the institutional glue that maintained the Alliance for decades is not strong enough to provide sufficient coherence. Divergent national interests and shrinking resources force a new deal for the provision of Europe's security. Amongst the three scenarios, this is the most unlikely as it contains high risks and costs on both sides of the Atlantic.

In this scenario, with the inability to agree on expanding its sphere of influence towards global power projection, the American members of NATO lose their incentive to guarantee European security. The transatlantic bargain has become too asymmetric to be attractive, and the US abandons its European commitment in favor of more salient security challenges in Asia or elsewhere.

For some European nations, common defense does not necessarily require the US as patriarchic security provider. Great Britain and France could keep up a limited nuclear deterrence and the sum of all armament expenditure in Europe would suffice to build an effective European military, promote the progress of European integration, and foster a shared security identity. But a number of imponderables exist, and,



therefore, for some nations the transatlantic security cooperation forms a national interest. First and unsurprisingly, the close tie between the US and UK does not speak for untying American and European security bonds. In the case of US retrenchment from Europe, British geopolitical ambitions would further magnify their existing Europe-skepticism. The payoff for an engagement in European security could be too small to be attractive for the UK. Lacking the *special relationship* with the US, the UK would not be *primus inter pares* amongst other big nations like France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Poland. Hence, the UK's influence in Europe would decline. Second, Poland and the Baltic states built their security architecture based on the US commitment. If there has been national doubt about the NATO commitment for the defense of these nations, now the largest provider for a credible military defense is missing in the equation. The security provision through EU's CSDP as it is today will not satisfy the security requirement of these nations. More effort is needed to establish a coherent military capability that conveys the power and prestige at the same level of protection and security cooperation that NATO provides today. Russia on the other hand will take the opportunity of perceived European weakness to further her influence in Europe. Third, France and Germany with their traditional Europe-centric focus would seek to institutionalize European security under the EU umbrella. Germany's strong US orientation, however, would require another strong institutionalized political forum substituting for NATO, which currently is the only political forum dedicated to transatlantic cooperation. Fourth, World Wars I and II have shown that US interests cannot be seen as separate from European security. If conflict in Europe occurs both internally or with Russia, US interests will be affected and military assistance and/or other support will become necessary. Fifth, today, NATO provides a unique forum for military standardization that also benefits US armament industries through the opportunity to virtually dictate military standards. The resulting benefit of military

interoperability and mutual economic exchange would decline over time.<sup>1</sup> Common out-of-area operations will become more complicated, more costly, and thus, more unlikely. Operations like ISAF or OUP, for example, benefitted from long-established standards, interoperability, and working relationships. Sixth, NATO's well-established forums for partnership and coordination will lose their strategic meaning and reduce their effect on stability in regions covered by MD, ICI, and PfP. For many of the affected countries, the US alone does not constitute a suitable partner for cooperation, while the EU alone lacks the prestige to provide the same level of authority that NATO does today. Lacking the stabilizing and CM functions of partnership programs, uncertainty and instability in Europe's neighboring regions might increase.

Therefore, a multitude of prerequisites are required in order to achieve a successful transition. The level of European integration and common identity must improve to allow for sufficient trust and resolve to build a new European security and defense culture. The only organization suitable to support this effort is the EU. Integrating the existing EU political and economic institutions with a common defense effort will *de facto* require a constitutional framework for Europe, where nations relinquish responsibilities, authorities, and resources to the EU beyond recall. The first initiative for a European constitution eventually failed in 2005 when the people of France and the Netherlands rejected the constitutional contract in national referendums. This expressed both the prevailing skepticism about relinquishing national power for federal European institutions and the perceived lack of necessity to consolidate Europe's national capabilities and capacities. A changed threat perception or a reevaluation of available capabilities could force the EU to overcome both. With reemerging Russian power and an American

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<sup>1</sup> Stephanie C. Hofmann, *European Security in NATO's Shadow: Party Ideologies and Institution Building* (Cambridge, [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 32.

retrenchment, the incentive to overcome national resentments against "more Europe" will increase. This, however, is a long-term process that will require a gradual buildup of European defense capabilities and a common defense identity. In order to satisfy concerns about the transatlantic partnership, parts of the process must be directed towards a continued effort to foster and institutionalize the relationship between the US and the EU. The project of a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) might serve as one step in this direction.

Further, in order to retain the strategic value of Turkey with respect to European security, the EU must eventually find a mechanism to bind Ankara to a common European agenda, not only in military, but also in political and economic terms. Turkey will remain a key nation to link European security interests and stability in the (extended) Middle East, and Ankara is very much aware of both its geo-strategic position and its geo-political value for the West. The chance to strategically bind Turkey to the EU, however, might have passed. If the last years' nationalistic rhetoric and Islam-centric politics stand for a change of Turkey's strategic culture, a reorientation away from Europe with its Western-democratic norms and standards is inevitable. In that respect, time is precious to reconsider the EU's stance towards a Turkish membership.

The second NATO member that would not be covered by an EU security agreement is Norway. With their common border with Russia and the claims about hydrocarbon resources in the Barents Sea, there are more incentives on the Norwegian side to seek close security cooperation with the EU once NATO no longer serves this requirement. With the existing level of political and economic cooperation, at least a bilateral security agreement between the EU and Norway appears likely.

Overall, after decades of the transatlantic bargain during the Cold War and beyond, there should exist a natural incentive to replace the US security provision with a sovereign European security and defense policy.

But only at first glance does the reluctance to retire NATO appear to bear a good deal of counter-intuition, at least from a US perspective. The asymmetry of the transatlantic bargain with regard to military capability and capacity has become too obvious. But nearly seven decades of NATO have fostered institutions, working practices, prestige, and a common understanding of security that serves members on both sides of the pond. Transition towards an independent European security architecture would take time, effort, and resources, and risks the level of stability the transatlantic partnership has reached. In a cost-benefit-risk assessment, this scenario appears to be the least likely for the next decades.

## **#2: NATO will Carry On.**

This scenario incorporates NATO's status quo with the essential mission of militarily defending Europe with the US providing European security and a limited out-of-area CM and outreach capability. Essentially, NATO continues in its original state and the US is forced to make a strategic decision favoring Europe, which delays or reverses the pivot towards Asia.

The short-term vision of current security concerns regarding Russia and the prevailing budgetary issues in most of the member states does not allow for much leeway in fundamentally changing the scope of the Alliance's agenda. While this scenario serves most of the short-term requirements, it lacks the strategic vision of twenty-first century security as well as a global vision on long-term challenges and strategic opportunities.

Nations with specific concerns about Russian ambitions, like Poland and the Baltics, will find sufficient comfort in the current security provisions of the NATO treaty under Article 5. The Wales summit findings and newly established capabilities involving rapidly deployable operational capabilities, along with visible signs of resolve, underline

both the necessity for a credible and robust common defense capability, and the US will to continue providing for European security and stability.

In addition to the fundamentally defensive posture of NATO, member nations like France, Germany, Turkey, and UK will continue to seek and expand regional cooperation at NATO's margins.

Geographically, these regions cover the hotspots of radical Islamist developments at the margins of NATO's sphere of influence in Northern Africa, the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the extended Middle East. Other emerging crises will include the Arctic region, freedom of global trade, struggle for resources, migration, and the non-geographical spheres of conflict in cyberspace. The current NATO framework serves all these challenges, and no need exists to fundamentally change current treaties and agreements between NATO, EU, or its individual members.

For now, retaining the status quo alleviates the need for compromise between the conservative states that are reluctant to give up their status within today's NATO and those with a more progressive vision. In fact, this scenario represents the Alliance's *realpolitik* after multiple rounds of enlargement without streamlining the decision-making processes. Caused by the reemerging Russian threat, the Alliance of 28 nations is about to lose the agility to focus on the future, and the US, held captive by strategic requirements at a global scale, has already lost the freedom of action in the European theatre. In the face of shrinking US defense budgets, the split between Europe and Asia will pose the crucial test of American foreign policy and its ambition to provide global leadership. Continuing the strong commitment to the European theatre has the potential to accelerate this decline. Thus, this scenario, while the most beneficial in the short- to mid-term, will put too much strain on American politics and is therefore unsustainable for long-term considerations. This scenario would, however, merge logically and effectively with the first scenario.

### **#3: NATO's Future is Global.**

This scenario is progressive in character. In essence, it foresees NATO as its members' security provider and offers a global perspective towards security institutionalization. Unlike the vision of NATO as a military service provider for the UN, NATO restricts its role to strictly focus on its members' interests. With China's emergence at hand, NATO would expand towards global reach into the Asian-Pacific sphere—principally following the US Asian pivot. In turn, the US continues to provide security for Europe while the EU continues to improve its own security identity. NATO would continue to provide the framework for European security. Beyond that, NATO becomes the framework-organization that promotes its members' and partners' global interests, values, and norms. The benefit falls on both sides of the Atlantic. The US will regain its freedom of action by embracing institutional partnerships in Asia. Instead of engaging unilaterally, risking overextending its military and political capabilities, and experiencing a strategic culmination against the emerging power of China, US foreign politics in Asia would have more legitimacy and international prestige. The investment in European security has to be seen as an opportunity cost with better returns in comparison to the other scenarios. The commitment to Europe will free up European NATO members' resources, otherwise used for regional defense, to globally engage politically and militarily. The Alliance's organic resources could provide a reliable security provision with secured access to US military capabilities. In turn, nations with national interests resting outside Europe (like Great Britain, France, Germany, or Italy) would be able to politically and militarily engage under the well-established framework of NATO and its partnership organizations. In addition, "a more global NATO, backed by the world's leading democracies, would enjoy greater legitimacy, and that should allay the fears of those committed to a strong international



order.”<sup>2</sup> Overall, an expansion of NATO beyond Europe would lead to a transatlantic win-win situation.

However, this scenario has significant implications internal and external to the Alliance. First, in pursuit of expanding its strategic scope, it is paramount that European security and defense must remain the objective of the alliance. Deviations from this fundamental agreement will render the Alliance weak and vulnerable, and destroy the very foundation of the treaty. Over time, the EU might gradually adopt this mission, but the basic premise must hold. Second, past NATO expansion has demonstrated that finding consensus amongst member nations can be a lengthy and complicated process. In order to improve the ability to act, new measures must be taken to agree on actionable objectives with respect to the expanded area of interest. By no means will finding consensus be less complicated, but a basic agreement on norms, values, and interest will help identify the *art of the possible*. In that respect, candidates for NATO membership must culturally and politically match the Alliance’s character and profile. Third, when inviting new members NATO must carefully weigh the requirement for extending protection under the provisions of Article 5. Deterrence must remain credible and expanding beyond its original territory would greatly exceed the Alliance’s capability and will. The reason for this is twofold. On the one hand, automatized military responses are Cold War relicts that have the potential to destabilize the political equilibrium. Cyber security is only one example where military responses have the potential to produce undue conflict escalation. On the other hand, it makes the Alliance—as a whole—susceptible to political blackmail if smaller nations drag NATO into a nationally motivated conflict. Regardless of how NATO reacts towards such incidents, its prestige will suffer due to either giving in or not acting. Thus, managing the treaty’s mutual-assistance clause is a

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<sup>2</sup> Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, “Global NATO.,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 5 (October 9, 2006): 105–13.



fundamental requirement for further NATO expansion. Fourth, if consensus cannot be achieved, the new-NATO framework must allow for subsets of NATO members to act on the behalf of all. The coalition-of-the-willing model set the precedent that now must become institutionalized in NATO's legal framework. Fifth, the new-NATO framework must reflect pre-existing (bi- or multilateral) agreements in order to avoid mismatches in perceptions and strategy. "Although members of an alliance may also be part of a collective security organization and may engage in other forms of security cooperation, failure to keep these concepts distinct can lead to misleading analyses and muddy policy-making."<sup>3</sup> That is particularly important given the number of bilateral agreements and security guarantees of both the US with its allies (Japan, Philippines, Taiwan, etc.) and China (e.g. individual ASEAN members like Cambodia). Sixth, given the new scope of NATO, its relationship with the UN must be reconfirmed. Rather than existing as a purely defensive alliance with out-of-region capabilities with which the UN could build, the global scope of NATO with focus on an extended definition of defense and national security which reduces the potential for an impartial external actor for CM. However, other commentators are less concerned about potential neutrality concerns. In that respect, Daalder and Goldgeier note:

[An] enlarged NATO would not undermine the United Nations or the European Union, neither of which has the kind of military capacity that NATO possesses. Because NATO essentially is a military alliance-albeit one with a democratic political foundation--even an enlarged alliance would not become another UN. Rather, NATO would become a more capable and legitimate adjunct to the UN by helping to implement and enforce its decisions.<sup>4</sup>

This changes little in overall UN capabilities or perceived utility, but other international actors will take note in case of UN-mandated

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse," *Survival* 39, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 4, doi:10.1080/00396339708442901.

<sup>4</sup> Daalder and Goldgeier, "Global NATO."

NATO interventions. Seventh, NATO's new framework must emphasize its political capabilities to complement its military capabilities in order to provide a nuanced and comprehensive approach towards new conflicts. NATO's political and diplomatic weight, rather than its military power alone, will complement US capabilities. The anticipated gain in legitimacy must be based on a broad spectrum of institutionalized capabilities. This certainly includes NATO's operational capabilities to plan and execute military missions, and includes the invaluable capability of standardizing common procedures and improving military efficiencies. Building partnerships and creating cross-domain cooperation should effectively and efficiently expand NATO's sphere of influence. Like the intensified cooperation between NATO and EU, the *Berlin Plus* agreement might serve as a template for security cooperation between NATO and other regional organizations (e.g. ASEAN). However, NATO expansion in the past has basically ignored the fact that Russian vital interests were ignored. Repeating this mistake in Asia will inevitably result in conflict with China and other major regional powers. Without proper political attention or embedding NATO's new ambition into a broader strategy of economic and political participation, this endeavor will fail. A global NATO would require a whole-of-*all*-governments approach. Lastly, the risk calculus of states reluctant to expand influence (primarily France and Germany) should change if the political environment meets the preceding requirements. After all, Europe has a vital interest to act as a global economic player. This requires assured access to resources and markets. NATO can enforce its members' interests and play a significant role in international relations.

Overall, this scenario offers a balance between cost and benefit, and it assures a rebalancing of the transatlantic bargain. There is one main risk remaining that is inherent to the expansion strategy. Eventually, Russia and China might end up finding themselves in a coalition against Western dominance that must forcefully balance NATO's

global ambition. Institutionalizing the NATO effort strength and using soft power to complement its military power might ease the threat perception in both nations. NATO expansion remains a geopolitical move to contain Russian and Chinese ambitions of undermining the Western leadership role.

Liberal democracies tend to avoid a narrative that points out power calculations as a zero-sum game, but Russian and Chinese ambitions give little hope that they would adhere to a Western-defined, liberal rule-set. In her speech at the 51<sup>st</sup> Munich Security Conference, German Chancellor Angela Merkel noted, “the crisis in Ukraine has demonstrated that respect for the principles of Europe’s peaceful order can by no means be taken for granted [...] International law is being violated.”<sup>5</sup> Especially Europe must re-learn that super power politics still exist in the twenty-first century. The 2013 French White Paper critically notes, “[t]he first decade of the 21st century has shown [...] the failure of many States to exercise the basic functions of sovereignty”<sup>6</sup> The Ukraine crisis serves as a wake-up call in this respect.

Likewise, Europe as a whole needs to find its political identity and culture. Many European nations struggle internally to find the proper foreign policy to match their culture, their interest within the Union, and their role in the context of a globalization. The socio-political debate about the use of military power in foreign politics must remain high on the political agenda. Afghanistan and Iraq have raised questions about the legitimate utilization of military instruments to serve national security interests. The perceived failure in both missions did not help the discourse. So far, European polities have failed to convey the necessity to expand their aggregate national security beyond European or

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<sup>5</sup> Merkel, “Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel on the Occasion of the 51st Munich Security Conference.”

<sup>6</sup> François Hollande, “French White Paper on Defence and National Security - 2013” (République Française, July 2013), 38.

even national borders.<sup>7</sup> The Ukraine crisis fosters public skepticism and could possibly cause a European retrenchment. The lack of agreement, unlike in the US, creates mistrust in plans for expanding NATO's sphere of interest. Consequently, national governments are currently too risk averse to progressively embark on expansive strategy.



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<sup>7</sup> Michael Rühle, "Entwicklungslinien des Atlantischen Bündnisses (Lines of development of the Atlantic Alliance)," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, no. 43/2006 (October 13, 2006), <http://www.bpb.de/apuz/29454/entwicklungslinien-des-atlantischen-buendnisses?p=0>.

## Conclusions

*Quo vadis*, NATO? That is the question to which political commentators and IR theorists do not find a coherent and convincing answer. This thesis included a description of the extreme positions in that argument. On the one hand, the European nations must take over independent responsibility for their security—eventually. The defense of Europe must ultimately lay with those whose sovereign rights and duties demands taking over this responsibility. Individual nations do not have the size, military capability, and economic resources to assume this task alone. Institutionalized security provision for Europe is a necessity in the twenty-first century. In the scenarios discussed in this thesis, the gradual process of taking over European security from NATO implies its demise. Even if NATO will initially continue with its current fashion of retrenching security interests to the defense of Europe and restricting its means and capabilities to military power, the decrease of US security provision will eventually have the same outcome. On the other hand, NATO can once more transform and provide for its members' modern set of comprehensive security interests. This goes beyond the idea of NATO as a global-security provider for singular threats from international terrorism or failed states, for example. Rather than taking a passive stance toward global security and reacting to crises as they develop, NATO would elevate its partnership ambitions to global levels. This must include political mechanisms beyond military cooperation and intervention.

The benefit of this new strategy falls on both sides of the Atlantic. NATO's global engagement would increase US prestige in pursuit of its national-security agenda and economic interest. The anticipated increase in legitimacy for the cause would result in more effective institutional means to prevent and manage crises, especially with China and other emerging super powers. Facing a multilateral and coherent opposition

changes the Chinese risk calculus for challenging US security provision in Asia. Further, it reduces the perception of unilateral and imperialistic behavior of the American pivot towards the Asia-Pacific region. In return, the increased effectiveness and the European contributions will make resources available to uphold American defense provisions for Europe. NATO's overall prestige will benefit from a coherent, common, and global security agenda. Overall, it appears to be a win-win situation for the Alliance members.

But there are a number of serious implications with the latter approach. The most salient is the lack of European acknowledgement of Europe's potential as a super-power and the inherent requirement to act accordingly. While the US has reacted to the global shift of power, Europe's strategy is limited to a political and economic approach to global security. With the CSDP too weak to become independent from NATO, the EU lacks a comprehensive strategy. While retrenching NATO to European defense further limits the freedom of action of the EU as a holistic entity, opening NATO to become an entity to represent American and European interests globally would overcome this shortfall.

A concept of an Alliance of the Willing would respect the interests of conservative Alliance members and provide the brand name for a new approach to corporate representation of transatlantic security interests. However, there is one absolute necessity in this new concept: new frameworks for the mutual defense provision for new members must be found. On the one hand, expanding Article 5 beyond Europe would eventually weaken the Alliance's credibility and effectiveness. Thus, any further NATO expansion without addressing this issue will challenge NATO's existence as a whole. The NORDEFCO initiative in response to Russian recent aggressive behavior shows the potential for binding non-members with similar security concerns close NATO without the absoluteness of a full membership. The initiative might serve as prime example for a viable global strategy for NATO. On the other hand, no

sovereign nation is inclined to accept NATO as partner if it does not bring its capabilities to bear when needed. Success in developing a strategic narrative that balances notions of influence and restraint will increase the internal and external legitimacy of NATO.

Eventually, the national cost-benefit-risk assessments on both sides of the pond, mutual security assistance, global strategic influence, and risk to European stability define the adhesiveness of the transatlantic Alliance. Russia's European-power ambitions challenge the resolve of the Alliance partners and the credibility and effectiveness of NATO deterrence. But member nations' motivations and their interest in influencing the general political and military focus of the Alliance are driven by the ability to achieve consensus—*the art of the possible* within contemporary geopolitical realities. In Europe, the Westerly-oriented nations had failed substantially to build their own security and defense identity, and in Asia, the absence of an effective regional architecture comparable to NATO allows China virtually unimpeded freedom of action. If unchallenged now, the lack of will and ability to exert influence in Asia will become a long-term strategic disadvantage for Europe.

In its nearly seven decades of existence, NATO has proven its capability to transform and respond to new security challenges. Today, this ability to change is as valuable as in the past. NATO's strategy must both seek and follow political change. The Alliance was founded to defend against Soviet aggression, contain the communist sphere of influence, and to create stability by preventing future war in Europe. Today, communism is an outlived model, but European stability continues to be at stake due to regional and global security threats. In a globalized world, geographic distinction fails the purpose of task delineation. In order to fulfill its original purpose, NATO's must finish its transformation from a regional pure defense Alliance to a whole-of-all-governments global security Alliance. The ability to interact and cooperate with global partners has the potential to further stabilize the security situation and



peaceful interaction. Military cooperation can open the door to otherwise unavailable political areas and regions. European NATO members must recognize the global requirements and potential the Alliance offers. Otherwise NATO will, sooner or later, outlive its purpose.



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